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TRUE CHRISTIANITY;

OR,

THE WHOLE ECONOMY OF GOD

TOWARDS MAN,

AND

THE WHOLE DUTY OF MAN,

TOWARDS GOD.

IN FOUR BOOKS.

WRITTEN ORIGINALLY IN THE GERMAN LANGUAGE,
BY REV. JOHN ARNDT.

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH,
BY REV. ANTHONY WILLIAM BOEHM,
And printed in London, Anno Domini, 1712.

First American Edition,
REVISED AND CORRECTED,
BY REV. CALVIN CHADDOCK, OF HANOVER, MASS.

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TO THE READER.

THE following work accidentally fell into the hands of the Editor; and after a careful perusal, it was thought too valuable a work, to lie buried in obscurity.

And, as transcribers and correctors of other men's writings, often make such material alterations, both in sentiment and language, that the real authors are scarcely to be seen; and as most readers, when perusing any production, wish to be able to form some just ideas of the genius and talents of the real author or translator; so to accomplish the above purpose, it was thought best, in correcting the following work, to preserve the language and sentiments of the translator entire: Although the language appears to be somewhat ancient, and the sentiments in some few instances obscure, and in others inaccurate. Therefore the only alterations which have been made are such as respect redundant and obsolete words, orthography, the addition of some words, and the transposition of some sentences; that the ideas of the translator might appear more conspicuous.

Thus corrected, the work is submitted to the public inspection, with the sincere prayer of the Editor, that the blessing of Heaven may attend it, and that it may prove a savour of life unto life, to many, as we are informed (in the preface) it did soon after its first publication, and not of death unto death to any into whose hands it may chance to fall.

CALVIN CHADDOCK.

Hanover, Oct. 1809.

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PREFACE OF THE TRANSLATOR.

ARNDTIUS'S name hath been all along venerable in the Protestant churches, ever since the celebrated work of *true christianity* (part whereof is here presented to the reader) hath appeared in public. The effects this book hath produced in the conversion of souls are so very many and considerable, that to give an account of them, would make up a history by itself; which therefore is not to be expected from a *Preface*. The Author has not only been esteemed (and so continues to be) by those of his own communion, but even by many of other denominations of Protestants; especially by such as have sincerely laid to heart the great *decay* of solid piety in these latter days, and been concerned in retrieving the honour of the christian religion, by making it shine in the lives of its professors.

2. Religion looked with a deplorable aspect in Germany, when our author began first to appear with his book of *true christianity*. It is true, that church was but lately reformed from many errors and superstitions; so that one would think, *true christianity* should have met with a more favourable acceptance among Protestants. But as the humour of the world goeth! *real piety* and true practical christianity has been all along an unwelcome gueſt in all ages, in all parties and denominations, in all states of christendom: and men, however they pretend to honour it, have found out a way to keep its *power* and *energy* at a convenient distance; not caring to be too nearly acquainted with a religion, whose *main scope* is to maſter the corrupt bent and bias of nature, and to bring the will of men into an entire compliance with the will of God.

3. This being the *nature*, *end*, and *design* of christianity, it is almost impossible that those who earnestly endeavour to promote it, should fare better than religion itself. And this was the reason, our Author with his book has undergone many severe censures and persecutions, when this came to see the light; one branding him with this error, and another with that, as in part has been related in the *preface* prefixed to the last *Latin* edition, printed at London in the year 1708. However, this disturbance raised about John Arndt and his doctrine, served only to render more refulgent the solidity of his principles, and to set off the better the lustre of *true christianity*, by the opposite darkness of a *false* and counterfeit one.

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4. One of the greatest efforts of our Author was, to remove from christianity the abominable *idol of a mere external formality*, (commonly called *opus operatum*) and to inspire people with an *inward sense* and gust of all the duties and functions they outwardly performed. He would have them not only maintain the purity of the doctrine, but adorn also the purity of doctrine with a suitable purity of life and manners; counting this the noblest ornament, the crown and topstone of *true christianity*, to which all other endeavours ought directly to tend. But as people never grow sooner weary in any thing, than in the work of reformation, (especially, if this be not only levelled against the corrupt manners and doctrines, but also against the corrupt faculties of the soul, and the very *leading principle* residing within the mind) so many of the Protestants, soon after the first heat of reformation was over, sat themselves down quietly, as if the business had been finished, and nothing left to be done by them. Whereas the true *applicatory* work of the reformation was then but *begun*, when the doctrine came to be recovered into some degree of purity, and refined from the adhering dross of abuses and corruptions, in order to be now constantly continued and handed down in life and practice to all succeeding generations. This would have been, and always will be, the likeliest way safely to preserve the depositum of a pure doctrine; which must needs be very much impaired, if not entirely lost, whenever people, once given up to the corrupt bent of their own will, freely indulge themselves in all manner of vices and loose practices: For the *will* and *inclinations* being once tainted with *self-love*, and other irregular passions attending it, will soon give a wrong bias to the eye of the *understanding*, and this being darkened will produce again abundance of errors and delusions, of abuses and mistakes in the lives, manners, and doctrines themselves, and so in the whole frame and practice of the christian religion.

5. These mistakes did shew themselves soon after the reformation. When Luther had in some degree turned out the doctrine of *being justified by works*, and established the doctrine of *justification by faith* only; many of his followers readily fell in with that doctrine; but instead of a living, active, operative, purifying faith, (as Luther required, and which is constantly attended with a train of heavenly operations) they set up a mere *carnal confidence*, and human persuasion; and instead of that *sweet rest*, calmness and composedness of conscience, which usually accompanies a divine faith, they rested in a state of *carnal security*, endangering thereby both their own and other people's safety. This proved the very inlet of many evils. It made way for the vilest of sinners to shelter himself under the cover of being justified only by faith without works. However, these most dangerous mistakes, as they did not spring up from the doctrine itself thus reformed, but from the misapplication people made thereof; so those that palliated their consciences with so slight and scanty a covering

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did thereby manifestly betray themselves as altogether unwilling to be wrought into a true *obedience of faith*, as the apostle's phrase is. All which may give us an insight into the various stratagems of the great enemy of souls, who, whilst people sleep, steals in upon them unawares, and soweth tares among the wheat.

6. It is true, abundance of dead works of the Papists, which vulgar eyes admired in those days, have been laid aside by Protestants: but is not our *dead faith*, which too many have raised instead thereof, as empty a thing as their *dead works?* Where is that compunction and brokenness of heart, that poverty in spirit, that humility, those internal breathings, longings, and desires after Christ the author of salvation? Where is that inward knowledge and sense of the *spirituality* of the law, and that sorrow, grief, and anxiety of heart attending the experimental knowledge of our apostasy from God? And yet all this must needs *precede* the practical application of the doctrine of *faith*, if ever the latter shall leave a saving change upon the mind, and prove a shelter in the day of wrath, and a stay in the storm of temptation. For all these acts of humiliation are comprehended in the *drawing of the Father*,* which is the forerunning *dispensation of the law*, whereby the soul, as by a *school master*,† is brought at last unto Christ, *to be justified by faith*. No sooner does she come to believe in Christ, but she is thereby removed from that stock which is wild by nature, and is ingrafted into Christ the true vine, in whom she now lives like a branch, and brings forth much fruit.

7. But where are those *fruits* which must unavoidably *follow* the doctrine of *faith* if duly applied by a returning sinner? Where are those sweet emanations and rivers of living water, which will readily *flow*, and often gush forth from the believer, though there were never a law to compel them? Where is that mortification of the deeds of the flesh, together with the succeeding newness of life? Where is that new creature, that patient resignation and submission to the will of God in his disposals of us? Where is that love of God shed abroad in the heart, and those other heavenly virtues and fruits of the Spirit springing up from the principle of faith as from a divine seed lodged within the soul? Are not these weighty and practical doctrines of *true christianity*, both as they *precede* and *follow* the settlement of a divine faith, if not quite lost, yet despised, neglected, silenced among Protestants in this degenerate age? The doctrine of *spiritual contrition* and *sorrow* of heart, being the product of the dispensation of the law, is turned by many into ridicule, and cried down for vapours, for a piece of melancholy, for the effect of an hypocondriac constitution, and for the restless workings of a distempered brain? Whereas it is one of the first operations of the divine Spirit, whereby the sinister bent and obstinacy of the will is rendered somewhat pliable, and the whole frame of the mind disposed to a liking of the following

* John vi. 44. † Gal. iii. 24.

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communications of the Spirit. The soul is qualified thereby to be entrusted in time with sublimer gifts and graces. But if this *preparatory* dispensation (under which a man *diggeth deep*, in order to lay the foundation on a rock) and first step towards a spiritual life, be neglected, and thus the very ground-work over-turned; (on which the whole structure of faith and religion was to be raised,) then it is no wonder, that all the rest falls to the ground: religion, without this previous work, being nothing but mere show and pretence, and the virtues, howsoever they may appear to the eye of men, but faint and counterfeit images of religion, but not religion itself, nor the genuine effect thereof.

8. The doctrine of faith itself has fared no better. Faith, as it is now in vogue, signifies no more than a firm *adhering to a certain sect* and denomination of people, and a violent maintaining of such particular tenets as have been received and approved by that party. All the ingredients of such a faith are nothing but human education, custom, tradition, persuasion, conversation. The zeal which goes along with it is entirely the effect of *self-love*, and of corrupt *reason*, the two great framers of sects and party-notions. There is no such conviction in this matter as is wont to attend a true faith, and to influence the mind of the believer with a full certainty and undoubted assurance of the truth and reality of the doctrines once received. This faith has not the least character of a divine work stamped upon it. It is entirely taken in upon trust, by the mere suggestion of tutors, teachers, and of other men in authority. This faith is handed down from one generation to the other; one friend perfuading the other into the same notional belief, and parents leaving it to their children, by way of inheritance. It is fit to serve every turn, let it be interest, honour, worldly greatness, preferment, and the like. No man is a greater enemy to the inward power of true religion, than he that is deeply rooted in this imaginary belief, and this barren set of human notions: for his rational activity being destitute of a superior guide to keep it within bounds, and yet busying itself about matters of religion, contracts thereby a multitude of spiritual pollutions. To which is often added a profane contempt of things most sacred, and a misconstruction of the more interior operations of God's Spirit, as was shewn before. Thus is *faith*, which, according to its primitive standard of scriptural signification, is entirely a *creation* of God, made a work and persuasion of men, and a *traditional* business, without so much as one ray of true gospel-light shining into the heart. Such a believer has the name that he lives.

9. But to set out this dark faith in its true light, we ought well to consider the contrary nature of a sound, saving faith, and the glorious display of the fruits attending it; some few hints whereof have been given already. True faith, whenever it is seated in the mind, brings forth works suitable to its inward impulse and constitution. These are termed *good works, fruits of righteous-*

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nest, fruits of the Spirit, rivers of living water; because they are brought forth by a believer as *freely* as a good tree yields its fruits, and a plentiful fountain its water. The true christian is constantly employed about doing good, and laying out what he has received; and yet is he not in the least sensible of any decay, but rather of a daily supply of what he has bestowed on others. *He that hath,* and practically layeth out what he hath, *to him shall be given, and he shall have abundance.* By these uninterrupted emanations of love and mutual acts of charity, the soul is so far from losing the fountain of life, that she rather moves nearer and nearer towards it, and heartily closes with Christ, who is both the original source and the means of all the graces conferred on her. For this water which the true christian has tasted, is in him a well of living water SPRINGING up gradually (and so not by fits and starts) into life everlasting. These are good works indeed. They come from the true gospel spirit of Christ, and by a constant, and as it were natural return, are resolved at last into the grand spring from whence they were derived. Such an one *soweth his seed in the morning, and in the evening withholdeth not his hand* from working early and late upon all occasions. This water of life is to him a constant monitor, to do good whilst he has opportunity. How plentifully did the christians of old drink of this water of life! The woman of Samaria tasted of it, when the Lord discoursed with her at Jacob's well, and she feeling the inward operations thereof, left her water-pot, designed to supply her outward want, together with the well itself, though highly extolled by her at first, and went her way into the city to give vent to these benign, and yet powerful infusions, and to declare to others the joyful tidings which had so wonderfully affected her. She was not able any longer to contain herself, but most affectionately invited her fellow creatures to the same enjoyment. So free and communicative, so ready and overflowing is this well of water, having no envy, no bitterness, no sorrow mixed with it. That glorious martyr, Ignatius, compares this inward work of grace both to fire and water: *My* (self) *love,* says he, *is crucified, and the fire that is within me does not desire any thing: But the living water springing within me speaketh inwardly to me: Come to the Father.**

10. But to return. This free and *unconstrained* gospel-spirit, which is an inseparable companion to a living *faith,* was powerfully preached up by Luther, particularly in the first years of the reformation. I cannot but subjoin here his graphical description concerning the life and energy of faith, thereby to give the reader a taste of the sense he had of this work:† "Many, (says he) when they hear the gospel, frame unto themselves a thought, which says, *I believe.* This thought of theirs being excited by their own

* In Epist. ad Rom.

† In præfat. German. præmissa Epistolæ ad Rom.

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strength, is counted by them true faith: Whereas it is their own fiction and cogitation, leaving no experimental impression at all upon the heart. And as it is but a human business, so it is not followed neither by any good work, nor amendment of life. But true faith is a divine work within us, whereby we are changed and born anew of God. It mortifies the old Adam, and makes us quite other men, in heart, in mind, in temper, and in all the faculties of our soul, bringing along with it the holy Spirit of God. O, it is certainly a lively, active, operative, and mighty work to have faith! So that it is altogether impossible for it, not to be constantly employed about some good thing or other. Nor doth faith ask a while, whether one ought to do good works; for it hath done them before one can ask, and is continually employed about doing. He therefore who is destitute of such works, is for certain a faithless man, or downright unbeliever"

11. Now if this *active faith*, set forth by Luther, had continued to be pressed and inculcated, as it was begun by him; we should then have preserved the doctrines both of *faith* and of *good works*, in their soundness and integrity. *Faith* would have been a divine principle woven into all the faculties of the mind, and displayed itself by *works* as the immediate product thereof: But the former being in a manner lost; it is no wonder, the latter shoots forth into many luxuriant branches, and quite degenerates into some empty moralities, raised on no other foundation, than the scanty goodness of the natural man. Such works, though they may often attract the eyes of the beholders for a while, dazzling them with a glaring and sudden lustre, and gaining to those that do them the repute of *very good men*; yet will they upon impartial examination deserve no better character than to be ranked among the *splendid sins*, as Augustin is said to have called the very best works of the heathens. For inasmuch as they do not taste of Christ, of faith, of the Spirit of adoption, of filial freedom, and a childlike dependence on God's power and mercy; they cannot in any wise come up to the worth and dignity, to the beauty and brightness of true and genuine fruits of the Spirit.

12. The enemy of souls is always busy to obstruct such endeavours as have a direct tendency to the promoting of true faith and religion. This doth plainly appear from the conduct of those who succeeded indeed the first reformers; but did not labour so much to express their *inward life* and spirit, as tolerably to keep up to the *outward form*, scheme and model by them raised. This has been in all ages one of the sources of corruption. Many have presumed to value themselves and their way of worship, upon a scheme of religion introduced by some apostolical and eminent men, without stirring up in themselves, a spirit of holy emulation, whereby to answer not only the external formality, but the inward zeal also, the love, wisdom, indefatigable diligence, and other divine characters which rendered their predecessors so conspicuous in their time. But what else can be expected from

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so dangerous a mismanagement of the work of reformation, but a piece of *false christianity*, consisting in a naked profession of some particular tenets and opinions of men? The most profligate wretch being ready to declare for a *primitive* form, and to stand up in defence of a notional belief, provided he can but rid himself of the spirit, power, and energy of the christians in those days. Truly, if things were but rightly settled as to these interior *spiritual realities*, intrinsically and essentially required, and if thus the reformation of the heart was made to go along with the reformation of doctrines, of rites and ceremonies; then no doubt true christianity would get ground on all sides, and flourish in the midst of crosses, as a lily among thorns. For to be a true christian (as a man endued with an apostolical spirit tells us) *is not a work of opinion, but of greatness of mind, especially when he is hated by the world.**

13. What has been said concerning the first zeal, and how apt men are to slide from it, is manifest from the conduct of Luther himself. An industrious observer of the reformation by him begun cannot but silently admire that fervency of spirit, that holiness of manners, that unaffected humility, meekness, and patience, which in the first years of the work he entered upon, would shine through all his actions. It seems as if it had not been without providence, that the very first *thesis* of that disputation, which proved in time the foundation of the ensuing reformation, did directly tend to a reformation of life, running to this effect; *when our Master and Lord Jesus Christ says, repent, &c. He requires that the whole life of his believers on earth should be a constant and uninterrupted repentance.* And the progress Luther made in the *first five* or *six* years was entirely raised on this basis, and was a proof of his being in good earnest, to recover the power of christianity, together with the purity of doctrine. The writings he published in these years, are enriched with a divine morality, and fraught with observations relating entirely to *practical* christianity. He runs down the inventions and traditions of men, and every where extols Jesus Christ, and the economy of salvation by him established. His insight into the dispensation of the law and of the gospel (which are the two grand hinges whereon the work of conversion moves,) is plain from his excellent *Exposition* of the Epistle to the *Galatians*. It came out in the year 1519, and so but two years after the aforesaid first disputation which proved so fatal to the church of Rome. There is a vein of unfeigned piety running through all his books and actions of that time. His *delivery* was plain, unaffected, free from rhetorical flowers and colours of speech: it appeared every where in its native simplicity; and yet had it some particular graces, and a certain celestial energy going along with it; which also easily made its way through all the little fetches and flourishes of a superficial scholar, and by a secret sting left in the heart of the hearer, forced

* Ignat. in Epist. ad Rom.

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often an approbation even from the worst of men. For whilst it enlightened the understanding, it warmed also the affections with a sense of the love of God, and wrought the will into some degree of compliance with his commandments. Not to mention here at large, his laudable endeavours in putting some stop to the farther progress of the *school-divinity*, and the popular prejudices which, springing up from it, pestered the minds both of teachers and learners in schools and universities.

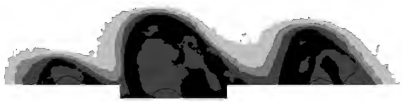
14. This piece of divinity, as it was a cursed offspring of Aristotle's philosophy, and a rhapsody made up of theological and philosophical distinctions, so it received a great blow by the doctrines of Luther; who did what he could to retrench the extravagance of the school-men, and to assert the dignity of the sacred Oracles, then, if not quite thrown aside, yet loaded and darkened with much heathenish trash, and abundance of crabbed notions and barren useless excrescences. The effect whereof was, that, left the sacred scriptures inwardly digested, should have nourished up the soul in the plain practice of piety, they had puffed it up with an intolerable pride and disdain of others not so well acquainted with the intricacy of the school-questions; it being always the unhappy product of *false learning*, that it does but discompose the mind more and more for receiving any solid impressions of true christianity hereafter. And it were to be wished, that there were not too much left in our modern schools and universities, of these impure streams and puddles derived from the filthy cisterns of the philosophy of the heathens, and the divinity of school-men: For these superficial notions having once vitiated the eye, and corrupted the taste of youth, they will hardly ever after relish again the plain and primary truths of the sacred scriptures, let them be never so profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, and alone able to make a man wise unto salvation.

15. But alas! these noble efforts, whereby Luther endeavoured to recover christianity into its first brightness and integrity, both as to *life* and *doctrine*, was in the following years not a little interrupted by a stratagem contrived by the enemy of souls. This was designed to divert our reformer from the pursuit of an enterprize which threatened a dismal ruin to false christianity, established hitherto, and fortified by a world of laws, constitutions, and authorities of men. Luther entered now the lists with a multitude of adversaries. He did no sooner touch the most visible corruptions, especially those which have *pride* and *covetousness* at the bottom; (the two great *ends* the corrupt clergy have always in their eye) but numbers of adversaries combining against him, rose up with great heat and fury in defence chiefly of those tenets which all along had served some *temporal* end or other; which however was cloaked with the specious name of *church* and *orthodoxy*. And this was the reason that showers of slanders were

poured forth upon, and most fierce and violent contentions raised against Luther.

16. Luther shewed in the beginning, as was said before, a great deal of moderation, meekness, and humility: but by little and little, when the fire of contention was kindled, and the minds of men soured on both sides, his brightness began to be visibly eclipsed. The more interior and sublimer exercises of the spiritual life, best preserved in a meek and quiet spirit, suffered greatly under these clamours brought against, and repressed by him. The violence of his temper being thus called forth to battle, he now endeavoured to settle the reformation by arguing, contending, and disputing, which he was before entered upon under many inward trials, supplications, frequent humiliations before the throne of grace, and most rousing exhortations to a reformation, not only of doctrine, but of life and manners also. And this undoubtedly had been the likeliest way to have established so great and weighty a work on a firm and lasting foundation. For a sincere amendment and holiness of life, whereby the tyranny of sin is broken, must needs be highly conducive both to obtain and preserve the purity of doctrine; it having been observed in all ages, that the remaining affections to sin hinder the learning and understanding of the things of God: Which an eminent divine* illustrates with the conduct of St. Paul, who intending to convert Felix discoursed first with him about *temperance, righteousness, and judgment to come.* Where this author goes on: "St. Paul, says he, began in the right point. He knew it was to no purpose to preach Jesus Christ crucified, to an intemperate person, to an usurper of other men's rights, to one whose soul dwelt in the world, and cared not for the sentence of the last day." Where he applies this particularly to the errors of the church of Rome, and then adds: "We may well think it a wonder, that no more men are persuaded to leave such unlearned follies. But then on the other side, the wonder will cease, if we mark, how many *temporal ends* are served by these doctrines. If you destroy the doctrine of *purgatory* and *indulgences*, you take away the priest's income, and make the See Apostolic to be poor: If you deny the Pope's infallibility, you will despise his authority. When we run through all the propositions of difference between them and us, and see that in every one of them they serve an end of *money* or of *power*; it will be very visible, that the way to confute them is not by learned disputations: (for we see they have been too long without effect, and without prosperity) the men must be cured of their affections to the world, that with naked and divested affections, they might follow the naked crucified Jesus, and then they would soon learn the truths of God, which till then, will be impossible to be apprehended. Let men pretend to as much learning as they

* D. Jer. Taylor in Concioncin John viii. 17.



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please, they must begin again at Christ's cross: they must learn true mortification and crucifixion of their anger and desires, before they can be good scholars in Christ's school, or be admitted into the more secret inquiries of religion, or profit in spiritual understanding.

17. This is so great a truth, that people may dispute even to the world's end, and yet never find the way to light, if the controversy in hand should border upon any thing of interest, lust, honour or any other branch of corrupted *selfishness*. These inordinate desires are too deeply rooted, to be quelled and silenced by the common disputes and contentions of men. *The secret of the Lord*, and the knowledge of the divine economy of salvation, *is* only *with them that fear him, and his covenant is to make them know it*. And this practical method was followed by Luther, when he first entered upon his great enterprize of reforming; though afterwards, when the noise and clamour was raised, he in a manner lost his way, the boisterous passions raised on both sides intercepting, in some measure, the soft and gentle communications and guidance of the divine Spirit! Every day was now a day of battle with him, and every place a pitched field to ward off the incessant assaults of a numerous enemy surrounding him on all hands. And as at his first setting out, he was entirely destitute of human help and support; so he cast himself entirely upon the power and mercy of God, the only proper object of faith in the worst of times. But this scene of affairs took afterwards another turn. Great men of the world ſtepping in, encouraged indeed and applauded the work once begun: however, their *ends* being too much bent by self-interest, and other sinister designs intruding into, and mingling with, the concerns of religion; their offers, aids, applauses, promises, and engagements, proved often but more prejudicial to the *main scope* of the undertaking, and more hurtful to the principal managers thereof. But as my intention is not to take here an exact survey of all the transactions of that age; (it being too ample a subject to be brought within the bounds of a *preface*,) so these few hints may suffice for the end here intended.

18. After the death of Luther, which happened in the year 1546, it was expected the *protestants* (for so the reformed party began to be called about the year 1529,) should have carried the work begun by Luther and his fellow-labourers, to a higher degree, and betimes repaired what was weak and tottering. For truly they stood now on Luther's shoulders; and seeing the ice broken, and a path beaten out before them, they might have drawn nearer and nearer towards fitly framing together all the spiritual building, that it might at last have grown up unto an holy temple in the Lord. And it was Luther's will, his followers should go on with, and by no means rest in the work by him set on foot. But alas! things fell out quite otherwise. Hardly had Luther got his *quietus*, when too many of his friends lost more and more the *main design* out of their eye. Striſes and contentions, disputes and

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wranglings, grew to an excessive height, but the plain practice of piety fell to decay. *School-divinity*, which was banished by Luther as a thing not agreeing at all with the native simplicity of the gospel and of the christian doctrine, gained ground again in schools and universities, and re-assumed now after its return, too masterly an air in matters of divinity. And so it has continued to do in most universities ever since, but more particularly where it was first turned out by our reformer. The unhappy effect whereof has been, and is still, that the plainness of *true christianity*, has thereby been exceedingly adulterated, and by this means a complication of spiritual diseases been bred, with a neglect of that healing truth which is in Jesus, and with a disrelishing of the knowledge of that truth which is *after godliness*, as the apostle's phrase is.

19 Thus did a great many lay themselves entirely out in maintaining such doctrines as were revived by the first reformers, without endeavouring at the same time to see them also experimentally applied in life and practice. Those made religion a work only of the *memory* and *understanding*, whilst the *will* continued in the bondage of self-love and pride, of ambition and emulation, and of other *pharisaical* defilements. And this must needs prove but a very lame and imperfect reformation at last. However, all this was covered again with the specious title of *zeal* for the reformed church. The doctrine, cast into a systematical dress, was made to appear under the name of *orthodoxy* and *analogy of faith*. This was attended with a set and circumscription of certain notions, rights, ceremonies, and, as it were, party-confines; which use to be the preliminaries for erecting a doctrine and opinion into a complete sect or party. Others were only busy about increasing the number of proselytes. And indeed many left the Pope, but never came to Christ. They cast away the more notorious prejudices, but took up more refined ones, and never received the love to truth, or any inward principle of grace. Hardly was any inquiry made, whether he was also a living member of Christ, that offered to be a member of another communion. Alas! How much is there left of this superficial work even to this day in the gaining of proselytes.

20. Now for this reason, many well-disposed souls have endeavoured both to lay open the *insufficiency* of this reformation, and to offer some *means*, whereby, if duly applied, things might be set to rights again. Some have compared the state of the church *before* the reformation, with the *bones* seen by Ezekiel* in his vision. As they were *very dry*, so every thing seemed dead and destitute of a principle of life in the times of popery. Not as if there had been no Saviour at all, but because there were *too many*. It seems the guides and governors felt in themselves a secret conviction of the deplorable deadness and emptiness of that church, and for this reason contrived abundance of human helps, means, and inven-

* Chap xxxvii.

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tions, thereby to amuse the ignorant, and to supply the place of a living Christ and Saviour. But all this would not do. The *bones* continued dead and *dry*. At last the work of reformation began. Christ is preached up as the fountain of life, to wash away the sin and uncleanness of the world. Many indeed questioned, whether these bones would *ever live:* nevertheless, a noise was heard. Some did like and applaud the reformation; some did not. Some were wrought upon; and some not. However, after various collisions and *shakings*, some bones came together, and flesh and sinews upon the bones, the skin covering them above. Thus did the Protestants frame at last a *body* of a church, and endued it with sinews, thereby to convey the doctrines and principles of religion into the body itself, and into every member in particular. But alas! what was said there may fitly be applied here: *There was no spirit in them!*

21. I would not be understood to cast any uncharitable reflections on any of the first reformers. Nor do I say, there is no spiritual life stirring at all in any of the members adhering to the sundry church-communions of Protestants. There have been all along some few in all ages and nations, who, without noise and bustle, have minded, and still do mind, the more *essential* and *spiritual* part of religion, without doting about questions, and some fashionable strifes of words. But this I dare say, that the *body* itself, considered in *general*, is still *dead*. The true *internal* constitution of a body is wanting; let this be considered with respect either to the *head*, or to the *members* adhering to it, and the various operations proceeding from the members. Where is that true communion the body ought to have with the head, and the uninterrupted influence the head ought to have again upon the body? Where are the vital emanations which must needs attend so close an union, and the real *effects* derived again from this union, upon the life, manners, desires, thoughts, actions, and the whole internal and external conduct of a christian? Again: if the body be considered in relation to the *members*; where is then that sweet *fellowship* to be found in our modern church-societies, which one member ought to bear to the other, and which makes every one employ its particular gifts for the profit and benefit of the whole, in a manner most abounding and universal, free from hatred, envy, bitterness, strife and animosities, as things utterly inconsistent with the nature of the church, body, and spouse of Christ? Where is that spiritual *sympathy* and fellow-feeling, wherewith those that are not dead, but living members of this spiritual body, must needs be affected among themselves? Where is that divine coherence and *symmetry* (not so much in particular opinions, forms, schemes, and modes of an external way of worship, as) in spirit, in power, and in reciprocal acts of an endearing love, and of a most cordial friendship?

22. Of this divine constitution relating to a true church communion, some small ray has been observed in the church of the brethren of Bohemia, about these latter ages; to which their last

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bishop* applies that apostolical description of a church, telling us, "That this congregation was a society of saints fitted by the work of the ministry, for mutual edification in the unity of faith, and for a sincere conduct in love and charity: That it was fitly joined together and compacted, by that which every joint supplies, out of a *power working within*. Thus whilst every one was the member of another, they were by common laws bound to common edification; being, as it were, glued to one another; not by the inducement of any external pomp or splendour, or affluence of wealth and honour, nor by the ties of any violent compulsion; but entirely by a virtue or *power working within*, and by the glue of the same faith, love, and hope." And this virtue working within, as this author calls it, or this divine nature derived out of the fulness of the head, into the whole body, and into every member of the body, proved the very cement, which in the better ages made the body most wonderfully cohere in all its members, and in the various functions and employments of the members. There was indeed, a *variety* and *multiplicity* of members, (as there is in the natural body) and of differing actions and motions of the members: Yet did they all concur and most sweetly conspire, to the advancement of the common interest of the *whole* body. All the actions did spring up from one and the same root or leading *principle*, and they tended all to one and the same *end* also. But then each member manifested the gift conferred upon it, in its proper place, sphere, station, and capacity, and moved in no other orb but where it was placed by Providence. Hereby the *manifold* wisdom of God displayed itself most gloriously; there being both a *unity* and variety in the spiritual body of Christ. A *unity* as to the productive and radical principle fixed within the mind; and a *variety* as to the differing *motions*, functions, and emanations proceeding from it.

23. Now those souls thus combined in the unity of faith, and works of love, make up together the spiritual *living body*, and the holy temple of Christ. They are the family of God. They are the spouse of Christ, and the domestics or household of faith. They are the spiritual house and the true church of God sanctified and cleansed by Christ. They are scattered through all such parties, sects, and confessions, as have preserved Jesus Christ as the Author of life, and the vital principle of religion, and do not disdain the contemptible meanness wherein his body appears at present. No sect or party can for itself claim the privilege of being the church or spouse of Christ alone, with an exclusion of other communions. He that would pretend to such a spiritual pre-eminence, would but betray thereby too much of the spirit of antichrist, together with a gross ignorance of the laws, constitutions, dispensations, and of the whole economy of the church of Christ. For of such heaven-born souls, some few have been at

* Vid. Comenii Paræsesis ad Ecclesiam Anglicanam de Bon Unitatis, Pag. 8. seqq. recusa Londini, 1710.

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all times in the several branches of the Protestant communions, (to whom this my discourse is chiefly confined) from the beginning of the reformation, down to this present age. In those souls the greatest mysteries of salvation have been preserved, and the principle of *regeneration* constantly handed down to some of the posterity, when all the rest went a whoring from the true God, after the imaginations of their own heart. Those souls make up that *peculiar people* of God, as the apostle styles them. They are a chosen generation, an holy nation, a royal priesthood, having the *Urim* and *Thummim* fixed upon, nay, within their breast; and being no longer servants, but *friends*, they have such things made known to them, as the Lord has heard of his Father. These have been, and still are, the shining *ornaments* and supports, the glory, the light and the salt of the external communion wherein they live, though generally hated by the domineering multitude of formal hypocrites, and branded with the odious names of *fanatics* and *enthusiasts*; it being the common lot of all those that are born after the Spirit, to be persecuted by those that are born after the flesh.

24. What particularly concerns the Lutheran church, to which the book here presented to the public leads me, John Arndt was an ornament thereof in the beginning of the seventeenth century, endeavouring then to awaken people from their lifeless formality, into an inward sense of *true christianity*, by restoring the doctrine of a *living faith*, to its first integrity and practical application. But this would be too prolix a task, if I should offer to enumerate here at large, the labours of those persons, who, under the gracious influence of God, have all along borne up against the tide of such mistakes and prejudices; as in part have been taken notice of here. Some few hints relating both to our author, and to some others joining with him in reviving a sense of *true christianity*, have been given elsewhere;* to which, for brevity's sake, such readers are now referred, as perhaps are willing to know something of the present state of religion in other Protestant communions, and particularly of the late stirs among those of the confession of Augsbourg, towards a revival of *true christianity*. The translation of this *first* volume, as it has been done by an English pen, so it is left to the English reader to judge of the performance. Perhaps something is lost in the translation, there being a certain, secret, and almost inimitable divine unction which accompanies some books in the reading, and which is scarce possible fully to transmit in any other words than those of the author himself. However, there have not been wanting witnesses among the learned, even in Great Britain, who having read it only in Latin, have expressed a high esteem and veneration both for the author and the book.

* See the Short Account of *Pietism*, added to the Abstract of *Pietas Hallensis*, p. 5. seqq. Edit. II. de Ann. 1707.

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25. Of this number is the late learned and pious Dr. Worthington, who called our author another Salvian: And in the excellent preface to his exact translation of *The Christian's Pattern*, introduces him as one of the brightest lights of the reformed churches, (much the same among the Lutherans, as Thomas Kempis à with his famous little Manual, was among the Papists,) "Whose business it was to convince men of their unchristian spirits and lives, and to awaken them to the minding of true christianity in life and power, that so they might not place the kingdom of God in meats and drinks, in mere opinions and outward observances, in a *speculative* and *notional* christianity, an unfruitful faith, a dry form of knowledge and godliness; but might make it their great care to become *really* better, a people *reformed* in deed and truth; to excel and outshine others in every grace and virtue; to shew forth the power of Christ's death and resurrection within them; to crucify the old man, that the body of sin might be destroyed, and that they might rise up to a new life, the holy, harmless, sweet, and humble life of Christ: And that by *living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world*, they might adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, which is by the apostle styled the *doctrine*, or the *truth after godliness*. To such purposes and respects of true charity and piety, to the good and spiritual interest of souls, were the writings of this faithful servant of God (John Arndt) designed."

26. This was the well weighed judgment of this great and worthy man concerning this present treatise, and the author of it. Then, having before compared him with Salvian among the ancients, and à Kempis among the moderns, he likens him in the last place, to the prophet Micajah, as to the hardness of his lot; acquainting us, how "such a plain and sincere dealing met with great oppositions and censurings, even among Protestants themselves; but how unjustly and undeservedly, says he, has been observed by others."

27. As for the *order* into which the whole work is digested, the reader is to observe, that it contains *four* books. The *first*, he calls the book of scripture; the *second*, the book of *life*; the *third*, the book of *conscience*; to which he subjoins the *fourth*, called the book of *nature*. In the *first* of these, he demonstrates the scope of the scriptures to be the restoration of the human nature, from the fall it had in Adam; and that for obtaining this great end, the reading of the scriptures ought not to be looked upon as a mere task enjoined by the laws of men; but that they ought also to be inwardly digested, and really transcribed into the soul of a sincere christian. In the *next*, he shews at large, how the whole life, practice, and power of the christian religion is to be entirely *derived from* Christ, viz. From his bitter passion, crucifixion, death, and resurrection. In the *third* book his design is, to explain the *kingdom of God in the soul*, and the divine *principle of a regenerate conscience* in its various motions and operations, with all that relates to the hidden

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treasure and pearl of wisdom. And in the *fourth*, he is an interpreter of the Mosaical Genesis; shewing how the great world, and all things that are therein, do both bear witness of God, and lead us constantly to him.

May the great Lover of souls grant his blessing to it for the end intended, and accompany it with his gracious workings in the heart of the reader, that he may obtain an inheritance among them that are sanctified in the truth!

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PREFACE OF THE AUTHOR.

1. HOW great and detestable the *abuse of the holy gospel* is, in these last dregs of the world, abundantly appears from the manners and conduct of those, that boast loudly of CHRIST, and of the purity of his word; but lead at the same time, a life so profligate, and altogether so antichristian, as if they lived not among christians, but heathens themselves, and professed infidels. This dismal state religion is reduced to in an age wherein vice, and an empty hypocritical pretence, has got the ascendant every where, has prevailed with me at last to publish this treatise; for no other end than that those who are as yet of a good will, and not quite carried away with the vogue or torrent of the times, may know at least, wherein TRUE CHRISTIANITY does consist; viz. In the *demonstration of a true, lively, and practical faith*, manifesting and exerting its life and energy by unfeigned godliness, and suitable fruits of righteousness; the name of a CHRISTIAN being given us, not only as we *believe in Christ*, but also as *we live in him*, and as he again lives in us.

2. Moreover, I have undertaken to write this piece of *Practical Christianity*, that it may serve for an instruction, how true repentance must needs proceed from the *inmost centre* of the heart alone, how it entirely changes the mind and affections, together with the other faculties of the soul, and conforms in fine, the whole man to Christ and to his holy gospel, renewing him day by day, into a *new creature*. For as every seed produces fruits of a similar nature, and like to the seed itself; so ought also the word of God to be the productive principle of plenty of spiritual fruits within us: And we ourselves ought to live constantly in the *new birth*, after being made once new creatures by faith in Christ. In a word: The whole intention and *design* of the book, is, to explain *how* Adam *ought in us to die and Christ to live*: It being not enough to know the word of God; but if we know it, it must then also be expressed in our whole life and practice.

3. Many of those that now-a-days apply themselves to the study of divinity, suppose it to be a mere notional and speculative science, or some piece of polite learning so much in vogue among scholars: Whereas, it is rather a living experience and practical exercise of the soul. Almost every one, alas! that goes about this study, does it with no other prospect than to get the applause of men, and to become great and famous in the world:

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But how few are there that will answer the true design of divinity, which is, that people should be made thereby thoroughly good and holy, and have their own will rendered conformable to the will of God! Thus is divinity itself, which should raise the mind far above these petty designs and selfish desires, turned into a means of promoting but the better, carnal ends and interests! Every one is now in quest of polite and learned men, by whom he may be instructed in arts, languages, and sciences: But hardly is there any one to be met with, that covets to learn from the true One, and only teacher and master, that great lesson of meekness and humility of heart; though it be an undeniable truth, that the holy exemplar of life which he has left us is the brightest pattern and safest rule to follow, and consequently the sublimest and most sovereign wisdom and art of arts, according to that of the poet:

> The life of Christ all learning us doth teach:
> No human wisdom it can ever reach.*

4. There are not wanting now every where such men as would be thought ministers of the gospel and of Christ; but there are exceeding few that are willing to be his followers also, or *imitators* of his life: at this rate, has the Lord *many* ministers, *but few followers!* notwithstanding it be utterly impossible for any one to be truly a minister and lover of Christ, unless he be at the same time a follower of his life also, according to that: *If any man serve me*, let him follow me. If any one love Christ, he must needs love also to copy after his most holy life, and to transcribe in his own life and conversation, the *humility* of Christ, his *meekness* and *patience*, his *cross* and *contempt*, his *reproaches* and *insults*, though they be never so sharp and afflicting to the propensions of a temper which never likes to be crossed by any opposition. And though we are not like to express to the full that sacred pattern of the blameless life of Christ, whilst we are in this state of our minority; yet it is meet that such a state should be loved, breathed after, and pursued with our utmost endeavours. And then surely we live in Christ, and Christ lives in us: For *he that says, he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.*

5. Truly men are now-a-days so far fallen away from the substance of things, into some empty and slight appearances, that they will be more inquisitive about learning, arts, and sciences, than about the *love of* God itself. They will seek to know every thing else, rather than to *know* Christ; though this knowledge exceed in *real* worth and dignity, all the wit, sciences, and arts of men, which without it must needs prove very barren, and altogether empty and fruitless. But then, (as I said just now) no man can be a true lover of Christ, except he be a follower also of the holiness of his life, and of the purity of his manners. But alas! so great is the degeneracy of most men in this age, as to be even *ashamed of* Christ, and of his life, and to count the meanness and lowliness

* Omnia nos Christi vita docere potest.

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wherein Christ appeared, unbecoming the life and manners of the so called christians. And to these belongs that just, though severe reproof of our Lord: *Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father.* And this is the true sense and *character* of our modern christians! Fain would they have for themselves such a Christ, as would be magnificent, splendid, wealthy, pompous, fashionable, and conformable to all the airs and humours of the age. If such a Christ were to be had, there would be multitudes of followers resorting to him from all parts. But now they cannot away with a Christ that is poor and indigent, meek and humble, despised and rejected by a profane world. They cannot bring themselves to have a liking to such an one; no, not by any means! they care not either to receive him, or to profess and to follow him. Unto those therefore he will answer in that day—*I never knew you.* As you heretofore disdained to know me in my *humility* and meanness; so I do not know you now in your *pride* and worldly greatness. *I know you not from whence you are.* O terrible word!

6. Now this *profligate life* and overflowing corruption of our modern christians, as it is diametrically opposite to Christ, and to the religion by him established; so it loudly provokes the wrath and judgments of God, which now begin to gather apace on all hands. So that almost all the creatures of God, heaven and earth, fire and water, seem to be *made a weapon* for revenging the affront and indignity offered to Christ, by the false and formal professors of christianity: Nay, the whole frame and system of *nature*, moved as it were with a just indignation, groans under the bondage of corruption, ready to break to pieces at the abounding wickedness of the world. And this, you will say, must unavoidably be followed at last by floods of misery, by dearth, slaughter, and devastations; by pestilence, and other contagious and destructive distempers.

7. Nor is there a stop here. For the *last plagues* already begin to rush in upon us with so uncommon a violence, and to crowd in one after another, that men will hardly be free at last from the revenging insults of any creature whatsoever. For as it was before the mighty deliverance of the children of Israel out of the bondage of Egypt, when this nation was scourged with most dreadful plagues and afflictions; so it shall be before the last glorious deliverance of the children of God out of this world, that grand and spiritual Egypt. With unusual, most dismal, and unheard of judgments, shall the impiety and unbelief of men be visited. And therefore it is time, nay, high time to enter upon an unfeigned course of repentance, whilst the tide of wickedness runs so high; and to set about the work of reformation in good earnest, whilst grace is offered, turning from the world to Christ, and by faith adhering to, and living in him: For those that "*dwell in the secret place of the Most High shall abide safe under the shadow of the*

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Almighty," and secure the interest of their souls, in the midst of a profane and dissolute world. To which tends also the warning of our Saviour: "Watch therefore and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass." And that of David: "Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them from this generation forever."

8. Now to prepare your mind, Friendly Reader, for such a saving change required by the gospel of Christ; this Treatise will furnish you with some *practical instructions*, or a sort of *manuduction* towards so important a work. It explains both the nature of faith, in order to obtain forgiveness of sin; and the saving use of grace, in order to acquire that holiness of life, and reformation of manners, which is wont to adorn and to evidence true faith, whenever it is begotten within the heart. People greatly mistake, when they place religion in nothing else than in a mere *verbal* confession, or some outward shew and appearance of a formal devotion: Whereas it consists rather in a lively *faith*, attended with most substantial fruits of piety, and with a train of christian virtues, proceeding from faith no otherwise, as from Christ himself, to whom faith is united. And so indeed, need there is that it should be. For since faith in itself is a good altogether unseen and hidden to the eyes of men; it is but meet that it should display and manifest itself by fruits of righteousness, and hereby become, in a manner, visible to the eyes of others. For faith is an active principle in the mind, which by its close adhering to, and hearty embracing of Christ, fetches from him plenty of heavenly graces; nay, righteousness and happiness itself.

9. Now whenever this faith is raised into a firm and constant *expectation* of such goods as are promised in the word of the gospel; then faith has begotten *hope*. For what else is hope, but a patient and quiet expectation of enjoying in due time the goods that have been promised to faith? The same goods being now, in some degree, attained by faith, and laid out again in charitable acts for the good of our fellow creatures; then CHARITY springs up from faith, which constantly reflects back upon the neighbour that love which it has received from God. Again, when faith sustains the examination or trial of the cross, and resigns itself quietly to the divine will and disposal; we may then conclude, that PATIENCE is brought forth by faith. But when faith either sighs under the burden of the cross, or returns thanks to God for benefits received; we must then pronounce PRAYER to bud forth from the fruitful stock of true faith. Moreover, when the eye of faith is beholding God's power on one hand, and man's misery on the other, and is now comparing one with the other; then it will bow and prostrate itself before the divine Majesty: and then we may say, that HUMILITY is the blessed offspring of the same faith. When at last faith is put to an hearty concern, lest by any false step it lose again what once it has received: or, as the apostle's phrase is, when it "worketh out its salvation

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with fear and trembling," then the FEAR of the Lord proves the genuine product of true faith, and adds the top-stone to the divine structure, so happily raised and carried on by a true believer.

10. And from this, I think it is manifeſt, that all the christian virtues are really of the progeny of FAITH, or, as it were, the children thereof inſeparably attending that principle, from which they originally drew their firſt breath, life, and happineſs. I say, if they be but ſolid, lively, and true christian virtues, ſprung up from God through Christ in the holy Spirit; they then will never be ſeparated from faith, which, on the part of man, is the very begetting principle of them all, and makes them all return into God, as certainly as they, by the means of faith, firſt proceeded from him. From whence it follows, that no man, without faith in Christ, can perform any work acceptable to God. For, from whence is true hope, sincere charity, firm patience, fervent prayer, christian humility, filial fear of God, but from faith? It is faith that fetches all this from Christ, that true, and unexhausted fountain of salvation. It derives from him righteousness itſelf, and all the fruits that are wont to accompany this righteousness.

11. But in this matter take heed leſt you perhaps intrude your own works and ſmall beginnings of virtue; nay, not even the very gifts of the new life, into the grand article of juſtification. For before God there is no manner of account had of any man's work, merit, gifts, and virtues; (let them in all appearance be never so bright and conſpicuous) but of the all ſufficient merit of Christ only, humbly laid hold on by faith. But this we have ſpoken of at large in the 5th, 19th, 34th, and 41ſt chapters of this firſt book, and in the three firſt chapters of the ſecond, to which the reader is referred. See therefore, I say, that the righteousness of faith be not confounded at any rate, with the righteousness of the christian life, ſpringing up from it: But that these two be carefully diſtinguiſhed from each other; the former being the basis of the latter, and these two taken together, the main hinges on which the whole life of a christian, in all its works and operations, must move. But then take care also on the other hand, leſt, by a wrong and ſinister application of this doctrine, your endeavours after a true holiness of life, be in any manner cooled or leſſened. For, wherever a hearty concern for a daily growth in the practice of christianity is wanting; there faith itſelf is wanting alſo, whoſe very nature and character is, daily to purify, to change, and to renew the heart. And therefore this work of repentance and mortification must be earneſtly reſolved upon; it being utterly impoſſible for any one to relish the ſweet and gracious infuſions of the goſpel of Christ, except he has taſted before the bitterneſs of a contrite ſpirit, and of an unfeigned ſorrow of heart; according to that of the Lord: "The poor have the goſpel preached to them." And—"Bleſſed are they that mourn, for they ſhall be comforted."

12. For how ſhall *faith* quicken and raiſe the heart into newneſs of *life*, unleſs it be firſt deadened and *mortified* by ſerious con-

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trition and affected with a sorrowful sense of all the former sins and transgressions? And therefore I would have you by no means believe, as if *repentance* was so light and easy a matter, as our superficial professors suppose, who place the whole of their religion in being *externally* sober and righteous, and free from the foul and visible pollutions of the world. The sacred writers do not use soft and delicate, but earnest and grating expressions, whenever they set forth the *intrinsic nature* of repentance. The apostle commands us no less, than to "*mortify the flesh and the members which are upon earth; to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts; to be crucified to the world, to be crucified with Christ; to present* (or offer up) *the body a living sacrifice; to die to sin, and to be dead with Christ,*" and the like. All which exhortations of the holy apostle entirely tend to remove far from true christianity, that delicacy and softness of mind, which is apt to indulge the flesh in its inordinate lusts and sinful propensities.

13. Nor do the holy prophets of old, when they describe repentance in its true and lively colours, use any softer or milder expressions; thereby to mince, as it were, and to palliate the matter. No! so far from that, their very words are as a hammer, to break in pieces, and as a fire to burn up whatever stands in its way. They require no less than a broken heart, and a bruised spirit. They will have the heart rent, and not the garments: They will have us turn to the Lord with fasting, with weeping, with mourning. But alas! where is there to be found at this day, so much as the least footstep of such a repentance as this? Christ himself will have us hate ourselves, deny ourselves, and forsake all that we have, if ever we have a mind to be his disciples and followers. And all these notable words, so full of strength and vigour, are made use of for no other purpose, than to make us go forth with power and earnestness against the common enemy of souls, who is always busy to slack our hand in the important work of repentance. And of this anxious care and severe contrition, we have a most lively image afforded us in the penitential Psalms of David, to which I refer the reader for a fuller information about the practice of repentance. Not to mention here the terrifying menaces of a jealous God throughout the whole scripture, whereby the sinner is required to bring forth repentance, with all the fruits answerable thereto; and this, on pain of being forever banished from the kind and glorious presence of God. And this impartial scrutiny of a man's own heart, together with the smart and exasperation of the law, is necessary, in order to make way for the sweetness, temperature, and mildness of the gospel of Christ, which, when these days of toil and labour are blown over, will most certainly take place in the soul, and, by exerting its own gentle operations, lead the penitent sinner into the easy, pleasant path of the love of God, strewed with plenty of evangelical promises, and displayed for his comfort in scripture.

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But both one and the other works in us the self-same Spirit of God through his word.

14. This serious, bitter, and internal *penitence* of the heart, together with the whole train of spiritual graces, the practice of faith and works of charity going along with it, is the main drift and subject of the book here published. For whilst it treats on faith, it cannot but touch also what is so nearly related to it: And this is love, the first and immediate offspring of faith. Again: what proceeds from christian love must needs proceed from faith also, if we trace every thing up to its first source and original principle. One thing I must notice here. This is, that some of my readers might, perhaps, take offence at a few passages interspersed in this book, being fetched from the writings of D. Tauler, of Thomas à Kempis, and of some other pious and ancient authors, which at the first view may seem to attribute a little too much to the strength and ability of man in the work of conversion: (from which, nevertheless, all my books derogate.) Therefore I earnestly entreat the reader, that he would be pleased to ponder well the principal scope and main design of the whole treatise, without stopping or stumbling at a few particular expressions. Now the main scope of the whole book is no other, than to lay open on the one hand the secret and abominable depth of original corruption cleaving to mankind; and on the other, to set forth Jesus Christ as the sole beginning, medium, and end of our whole conversion to God. This twofold consideration required to the aforesaid internal penitence of the heart, runs through the whole composure of the book. As the first will influence us with a profound sense of our misery and nothingness, and make us even despair of our own strength and ability; so will the other branch of this knowledge make us ascribe every thing that is really good to Jesus Christ, the great restorer of our happiness; that he alone may be our All and our Whole, that he may work all in us, and live in us alone.

15. May the Lord by his holy Spirit enlighten us all, that we may be found sincere and without offence, both in faith and life, until the day of Christ; (which is at hand) being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God. Amen.

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TRUE CHRISTIANITY.

BOOK I.

CHAP. I.

OF THE IMAGE OF GOD IN MAN.

EPH. iv. 23, 24,—*Be ye renewed in the spirit of your minds: And put ye on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness, and in true holiness,* (*or holiness of truth.*)

§ 1. THE *image of God* in man is the conformity of man's soul, of his spirit and mind, of his understanding and will, and of all his faculties or powers, whether spiritual or bodily, whether rational or sensitive, with the Divine Being, the Infinite Good; with all the divine attributes, virtues, and properties that can ever be *imaged* forth in a creature; with all the divine beauties, harmonies and lovelinesses; and, in a word, with the original pattern of the divine mind, and the perfect standard of that will from whence all *righteousness and true holiness* are derived. Now it appears manifestly, that man was at first created according to the image of God: And that this was after it had been first resolved upon, and in a solemn manner declared, by the Eternal Father, in union with his eternal Son and blessed Spirit, and with all his divine attributes, virtues, powers and properties; according as it is written; *God said,* that is, through the omnipotent WORD which was with Him *in the beginning*, even the Word that both was *with God*, and was himself *God*, he outwardly and substantially expressed his mind to this effect, viz. "*Let us make* man in our image, after our likeness," Gen. i. 26. Whereupon it immediately follows: *So God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he him*, according to

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the resolution and decree, which was just before mentioned by the divine historian. And this now was the *creating word*, the overflowing power and life of the Godhead, which went forth as from the *council* of the Holy Trinity (if it be lawful so to speak) into nature, whereby the image thereof became reflected in man, and rested upon man.

§ 2. And hence, by the testimony of the Holy Ghost, it is evident, that the Deity in Trinity implanted its image in man in the beginning; and that this was after such a manner, as the divine holiness, righteousness, and goodness might shine forth in his soul, and send forth *light* abundantly in his intellect, will and affections, yea, even in his very outward life also: And that all his actions, both interior and exterior, might consequently breathe nothing but divine love, divine power, and divine purity; and man might live upon earth, no otherwise than the blessed angels do in heaven, always doing the will of his heavenly Father.

§ 3. Thus man was made to lead a heavenly and angelic life upon the earth, and by an efflux of this god-like being and image in him, he had dominion also over all things in this elementary world; being for that end, but a little lower than the angels, and even that, but for a little while. Wherefore the creatures of the earth, sea and air, were universally put into subjection under him, that so he might rule them to his Creator's glory, by a divine virtue and power inherent in him: According to the express decree concerning him, whereby this was originally communicated together with that image, saying, "*Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*" So that all this is the consequence of man's being thus divinely formed, and *sealed* with the divine image and similitude, as a representative and vicegerent of God; whom he was to have *expressed* continually in love, power and holiness. For God was delighted to honour him; and this image he had made in man, on purpose to take his delight in him, and rejoice, as it were, in his soul, with the joy of a bridegroom in his bride,

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and of a father in his child born after his image. For even as a man becoming a father, and beholding himself, or *another self*, in his offspring, cannot hence but rejoice with an inward joy hardly to be expressed: So in like manner, God here becoming a Father, and beholding the express character of his person reflected in a living image of Him, or beholding *himself* in this his *offspring*, his rejoicing was thence "*in the habitable part of his earth;* and his *delights were with the sons of men*," as in whom he himself was *represented.* Thus God's chief pleasure was to be with man; in whom he rested as it were from all his labour: and our first parents and their posterity were to have always enjoyed this blessed communion, had they continued but in his likeness, and rested in him, and in his will, by placing their delight and pleasure in the original of this blessed image; which, as it was their *beginning*, was to be also their *end.* For though God rested in all his works, yet did he take singular and chief delight in man; because in him his divine image did most perfectly and transcendently appear: and did more eminently rest in him, than in them all, as in a sovereign *master-piece* of his creation; from which did shine forth the *excellent glory* in highest innocency, beauty and lustre.

§ 4. For this cause God planted *three* principal faculties in the soul of man; which are the *understanding*, the *will*, and the *memory;* that in these three the manifestation of his glory might more fully and distinctly be set forth, according to the variety of the divine numbers and powers. These faculties, as an out-flowing from its original source and root, the Holy Trinity produces and preserves, sanctifies and illuminates, most beautifully decks and adorns with its divine graces, works and gifts.

§ 5. Now it is the property of every image whatsoever, to *represent* a like form and figure of that which is thereby imaged: Nor can it be thought worthy the name of an image, or similitude, unless it be like to that original, that it is to represent. For an instance whereof we may take a looking-glass, in which a man beholds his natural face, and views the reflected image of his own person,

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according to the degree and goodness of the said glass. For in this an image cannot appear, unless it draw a likeness from the object which is set before it: or unless it conceive as it were the form of the *original*, which begets in it its own resemblance or picture, by a due reflection of the light, where there is no impediment to obstruct the same. And consequently as by how much purer and clearer the mirror is, so much more clearly and evidently does the image of a human face appear therein reflected: Even so in like manner the more clear and pure the soul is, so much the clearer and brighter does the divine image, or the face of God in Christ, therein shew forth itself visibly.

§ 6. And therefore to this end the great and holy God created man altogether pure in the beginning, as an unspotted mirror of his brightness, without the least stain or blemish, being endued with such faculties, both of soul and body, as were then perfectly blameless and unreproveable: That so the Divine Image might in him be seen, not as a vain and lifeless shadow appears in a glass, but as a true and living image of the invisible God, and as the likeness of his inward hidden immense beauty. Thus was man then, I say, created after the similitude of the Divine Being, in perfect beauty; there being an image of the wisdom of God in the understanding of man; an image of the goodness, meekness, and patience of God in the spirit of man; an image of divine love and mercy in the affections of man's heart; an image of God's righteousness and holiness, integrity and purity in the will of man; an image of his friendliness, his loveliness, his gentleness, his courtesy, and his veracity in all man's words and actions; an image of his almighty power in the dominion and government of man over the earth, and in the fear and subjection of all living creatures that was granted to him; and last of all, an image of God's eternity in the immortality of the soul.

§ 7. From this image man ought to have studied and learnt the knowledge of God and of himself: And this should have been done by him before all things. Out of this he might have known God his Creator and Former to be all things, the Being of beings, and the chief

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and only BEING, from whom all created beings have their existence, and in whom, and by whom all things that are subsist and have their being. Out of this his image he might also have known God, as the original of man's nature and fountain of his being, to be all that *essentially*, whereof the image and representation was shadowed forth in himself. So then we arrive hereby to the knowledge, that God must be all those things after an *essential* and most perfect manner, which are in the glass of the human soul, as in a true and lively mirror of the Godhead, represented; for the manifestation of his hidden glory to man, and for the revelation in nature of the divine perfections before unmanifested: And that the image of these ought to shine out clearly in man, to the honour and praise of God, who has graciously vouchsafed herein to demonstrate, according to the riches of his infinite power and wisdom, the most vivid traces of his unutterable goodness.

§ 8. Therefore seeing that man was to carry in him the image of divine goodness, it thence follows, that God is the sovereign and universal goodness *essentially:* And consequently that he is essential love, essential life, and essential holiness. Wherefore also to God alone all worship, praise, honour, glory, magnificence, might, majesty, dominion, power and virtue are to be ascribed as his due; because he is all these essentially: But not any of all these is due to any creature, or to be given to any thing besides, either in heaven or in earth, but to God only. And hence it is, that when one came and said unto Christ, whom he took to be no more than a *mere man*, "*Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?*" Christ said to him; "*Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God;*" that is to say, good essentially; know thou that but for God, and without God, no good can be: And what meanest thou then thus to call me *good*; seeing none is strictly good, but God alone? And this may suffice to have here hinted concerning the *knowledge of God*, as the same is derived from his image in man.

§ 9. Yet further it is to be noted, that man, out of this image of the Deity, should learn in the next place to know

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himself. He should know and reflect, that there is a vast difference between him and God; that the distance between the creature and the Creator must be beyond all conception great; and that in him there is no goodness at all, even in his best estate, but a *likeness* only or resemblance of the *goodness* itself, which can be no other than God. Man verily is not God, but God's *image:* And the image of God ought to represent nothing but God. God represented indeed himself in man; yet was not man therefore created a God by that: Nor was he made hereby a deity in this world, but after the likeness of the eternal Deity; that he might govern the same, not by his own, but by the power of God, as imaging and manifesting itself in his nature. In man, therefore, who is made the express similitude and portraiture of God, the very character and image of divine power, divine wisdom, and divine goodness; God alone should be seen, God alone should be glorified. Besides God nothing should hence live in man; besides God, I say, nothing should in man put forth itself; nothing but God himself should in him appear, operate, will, love, think, speak, act and triumph. For if any thing else besides God move and work in man, then man cannot be the image of God: but he is become the image of *that* whatever it be, which now moves and works in him; and is his representative by whom he is acted, driven, and carried away in such a strange manner. If man therefore would be and continue the image of God, there is a necessity for him to surrender up himself wholly to God, after the most passive manner: and so quietly to suffer God to do and work all things in him, even as he wills. Whence, by denying his own proper will, man ought in all things, without reserve, to fulfil the divine will by a most true and perfect passive obedience; as one resigned, devoted, and absolutely given up to God, in whom only he wishes to live. This truly is a divine accomplishment, and is begotten of God, to the end, that man may be a most pure and holy instrument of his divine Majesty, and of his works and will. Whereby it now comes to pass that man does not move his own will, but has the divine will instead of

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his own; does not love himself, but God; does not seek his own honour, but God's; does not challenge either inward or outward good to himself, but refers all to the original Good; and being contented to possess God, is consequently without the love of the world. Thus should it indeed have been with man, who ought to have freely rendered himself to be the organ of the divine operations: and to have stripped himself for this, of all self-propriety, and self-activity, that so God might be all in him, and do all in him, by his holy Spirit. To conclude then, nothing was to be, live, and work in man, but purely God alone, and his word.

§ 10. And herein consisted man's perfect innocence, purity, and sanctity. For what greater innocency can there be, than that man should not do his own proper will, but the will of his heavenly Father? Or what greater purity can there be, than that man suffer God in him to work and finish all things according to his pleasure? Or what greater sanctity, than for man to be as a well-tuned instrument of the Holy Ghost, the fountain of sanctification? Behold. here are innocency and simplicity in perfection. This is the highest innocency to be wholly without self-will. This also is the highest simplicity, to be simplified as a little child, in whom the world has not yet imaged or portrayed itself.

§ 11. In such child-like innocency and simplicity, man ought to have stood in absolute obedience to God: and God should have ruled in him without a competitor, bringing all man's faculties and powers into subjection to his sceptre of righteousness and peace; whereby a triumphant joy in the divine image would have also arisen in him, and God would have taken delight in him, as in a beloved son. Thus should the kingdom of God have been in man, both without and within, and the tabernacle of God with the glory thereof, would have ever been with man; had he but made such a total surrender of himself, in all passiveness of spirit, and true filial resignation, as the nature of this kingdom absolutely requires.

§ 12. Of which kingdom of God in man, by an entire, unlimited subjection to the sovereign will of his Father,

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our Lord Jesus Christ, the most complete and absolute image of God, was, in his human capacity, a most perfect example while he lived upon earth: For as much as he sacrificed and consecrated his will to God his Father, in perfect obedience, saying, "Lo, I come to do thy will;" and in perfect humility and meekness, saying, "O, my Father, not as I will, but as thou wilt;" and, in consequence of this his consecration, by the oblation of his will, freely despoiled himself of all honour and esteem; of all interest and self-love; of all pleasure and joy, permitting God alone to think, speak, and do every thing in him, by himself alone. In a word, he had always, as man, the will and pleasure of God, for his own; which God himself testified by a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Matt. iii. 17.

§ 13. This Jesus Christ, blessed forever, is the true image of God, in whom, and out of whom, nothing did appear and shine, but God himself; and from whom, nothing but godlike manifestations flowed forth; such as love, mercy, long-suffering, patience, meekness, gentleness, affection towards mankind, righteousness, holiness, consolation, life, and blessedness everlasting. For by him, the invisible God was willing to be seen, manifested, and made known to men. And furthermore he is, after a yet more sublime manner, the image of God; that is, according to his divinity, as being very God himself, or his essential image, and so, God of God, and no less than the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, in the infinite splendour of the uncreated light. Of which, I have nothing at this time to say; my design being here only to speak of him as he conversed, and lived in his holy humanity, when he dwelt upon the earth.

§ 14. In such an holy innocence as this, was the image of God also in Adam, our father, at the beginning, which he should, in true meekness and obedience, have kept. And carefully for that end, he was to have watched over it, so that he might not be tempted or surprised, for the sake hereof, to think of himself, as if he were some-body, or were to be to himself the chief good:

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But that hence he might reflect on himself, as the image only of the chief good, and as a mirror of the Godhead, made purposely to receive the reflection of the divine form. But, alas! he did not consider this as he ought, but chose rather to be this good to himself; that is, to be as God; he fell thereby into the greatest and most abominable of all evils, being deprived of this inestimable image, and so alienated from that communion of God, which, by virtue of it, he had before enjoyed.

§ 15. By all which it may appear, how man ought to have arrived, by beholding in himself this image, to the knowledge of himself; and how he ought therefore to have considered himself as the image only, without ever attempting to set up himself for an original, or to be the author and fountain of his own happiness, in like manner as God is. But there is remaining besides, another part of the knowledge of man's self through the divine image, which is greatly to be desired. And this is, that man was made capable by God, of all the manifold benefits of this marvellous image; or that there was a capacity in the human soul, to receive and reflect the divine goodness, and take in all beautiful forms from the essential word of God, wherein they are all contained, and whence they are all manifested and propagated. Now the knowledge of this is no less important than the former; for, as that is the ground of humility, so this is of faith. Wherefore, being rooted in humility, by the sincere knowledge of our own utter disability to effect any good for ourselves, by our having no more at best, but an image of the One Good; we ought also to be rooted in faith, to the glory of God, even in the faith of his divine operation; to the end, we may not miss of the good gifts which accompany the same. For it is no mean part of wisdom by faith, to understand, that man was made capable of all the benefits of this divine image, and together with it, of sincere and unmixed delight; of solid and pure pleasure; of flowing and melting love; of godlike peace and tranquillity; and of all the fruits of the Holy Ghost: And to know thence the revelation of the glory of God in man, even as it is in the angels of

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heaven. And this is a knowledge truly to be desired, which brings that peace which passes knowledge, being no less than the peace of God himself in the soul, as in his beloved image: And therewith, spiritual fortitude, power, virtue, dominion, majesty, harmony, life, and light, which are not to be separated from this divine image. In consequence of which, it is plain, that God alone should in man have been all things, and that man, by virtue hereof, would have been the tabernacle of God, so long as this heavenly image abided in him.

§ 16. Now had self-will been excluded, this could not have departed from him: And this abiding, God cannot but live and work in the creature; forasmuch as he cannot deny his own image. That God therefore may fill man, made after his image, it behooves man, before all things, to be emptied of himself, even as Christ Jesus emptied himself, when he made himself for us, of no reputation, by taking upon him the form of a servant; and to humble himself as much as possible, and become obedient with him unto death. So indeed it should be with man, made in the likeness of his Creator, and the love, and honour, and praise of himself, being thus excluded, only God should be his glory, his praise, his honour and worship. For every like is capable of its like, not of its contrary; and therein rejoices, and is glad. So man, being in the likeness of God, must thereby have been capable of God, to whom he was like: And being capable to receive God into him, he should not have received the creature, or the image of the creation; but should have rested in God only, and in him continually rejoiced. And in this wise, God had decreed to infuse himself into man, with all the treasures of his goodness; seeing that goodness is most of all communicative of itself.

§ 17. Lastly, by the image of God, man ought to understand how that he is, by means of it, united to God, and how that in this union man's true and everlasting union rests. And to know also, that as on one side, the union of God with the soul is its chief tranquillity, and only true rest, from which, peace, joy, life, and happiness, eternally flow; so on the other side, the chief

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restlessness and torment of the mind, with all vexation of spirit, cannot happen otherwise, than by the breach of this union, or by ceasing to be the image of God; which is, by man's turning himself to the creature, whereby he is deprived of the chief and eternal Good, from which, for the sake of the creature, he is turned away.

CHAP. II.

OF THE FALL AND APOSTASY OF ADAM.

ROM. v. 19.—*As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.*

§ 1. THE fall of Adam was disobedience to God; whereby man turned himself away from God, towards himself, and robbed God of his honour, in that he himself thought to be as God: But while he was seeking thus to make himself a god, because he was but a thief, and a robber of the divine honour, he was therefore stripped of the divine image, divested of the perfect hereditary righteousness, and spoiled of that holiness which comes from God; being thenceforth, as to the understanding, dark and blind; as to the will, stubborn and refractory against his Maker; and as to the powers and faculties of the whole heart and spirit, universally alienated from God; and so from a favourite, turned to be his enemy.

§ 2. Now this abomination is in all men propagated, and is spread throughout the whole mass, by means of fleshly generation: and thence, by inheritance, it passes into them all, not without a certain necessity of nature. The plain consequence of which is, that man is hereby become spiritually dead, and is made the child of wrath and damnation, until he be redeemed out of this miserable state by Christ. Let not then any of them that are called christians, here deceive themselves; but let them take heed, how they go about to lessen or extenuate the transgression of Adam, in whom they are fallen, as if it were nothing more than some little peccadillo, a poor

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trifle, or the eating of an apple at worst. But rather let them assuredly think and believe, that the guilt of Adam, as well as of Lucifer, was, that he fain would be as God; that it was the same transgression in them both; that it was the same, most grievous, most heinous, and most detestable crime in one, as in the other; the same wicked apostasy, the same vile treason, and the same tyrannical affecting and usurping the rights of the divine Majesty, even to be as God.

§ 3. This apostasy (for indeed nothing less was it) was first begotten in the heart: And being there conceived, was afterward, by eating the forbidden fruit, brought forth. Of which, there is a very lively similitude set before us, in the crime of Absalom, as in a picture for us to reflect on. For first, Absalom was the son of the king; and Adam is called the son of God. Secondly, there was none so praised as he for his beauty; and the beauty of Adam, in the likeness of God, was above that of all the visible creatures. And thirdly, he was the favourite of his father; and Adam might be termed in like manner, God's favourite. Now herein then did the fall of Absalom, and his sin against his father, consist, in that he was, in his heart, first turned away from his father, towards himself; and thence forgetting the high prerogatives which he, as a son, did enjoy from him, was for setting up himself instead of his father, who loved him so tenderly. And therefore not contented to be the king's son, nor to be the most beautiful and accomplished person that eye almost could behold, so that in all his father's kingdom, there was none so much admired as he, for the fineness of his person; forasmuch as from the very sole of his foot, even to the crown of his head, there was no blemish in him; nor lastly, to be the most dear and beloved one of his father, even the darling of his heart, as it did evidently appear from his father's tears and lamentation for him, which the history records: I say, not being contented with this glory, he plotted to usurp even the royal dignity itself, from his king and his Father; and having once entertained and conceited in his mind, such a thought as this, he began

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afterward to profess himself openly the enemy of him that begat him, and to lay snares for his very life.

§ 4. So in like manner man, when in honour, knowing not how to rest satisfied, in that he was numbered even among the sons of God; in that he came forth from the hands of the Almighty, both in body and soul, without blemish, and was one of the greatest master-pieces of beauty in the creation; and lastly, that he was (not only a son, but) the darling of God, and his delight; would, as if all this were a little matter, needs be for scaling heaven, that he might be yet higher, and nothing less would serve him, than to set up himself for God too. Whereupon he conceived in his heart, an enmity and hatred against God, his Creator and Father, whose throne and dignity he began foolishly to affect; being disposed, had it been in his power, even utterly to ungod him, and drive him forever out of the world; that the terror of Him might not remain upon him. Now who could ever commit a sin more detestable than this? Or what could there be thought of, even more abominable?

§ 5. Hence after this, man became inwardly like the devil, bearing his express likeness in heart and mind; since both the one and other of them had now sinned the same sin, had committed the same high crime, as traitors against the Majesty of heaven. No longer does man now carry upon him the image of God; but the portraiture of the devil. Nor any longer is he after this, the instrument of God and his Spirit; but the organ of the devil and his spirit, and so is thereby capable of all manner of devilish wickedness. And thus man losing the image that was heavenly, spiritual, and divine, became altogether earthly, fleshly, and brutish, yea, devilish. For the devil, that he might imprint and seal his own image upon man, cunningly soothed him up, and by a train of enticing and deceitful words, so charmed him, and prevailed on him, as to let him sow in him his seed, which is called the *seed of the serpent;* by which seed, I chiefly understand, self-love or self-will; and the ambition of being as God, that is, an affectation of supremacy, or of God-head.

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§ 6. Hence it is, that the holy scripture calls, not without ground, those that are drunk and intoxicated with self-love, the generation of vipers, or the serpent's offspring; and all those who are of a proud and devilish nature, the seed [and progeny] of the serpent. Wherefore, I will put enmity, saith God, between the seed of the serpent, and the seed of the woman: Or "between thy seed," speaking to the serpent, "and her seed."

§ 7. Now out of this seed, this viper's seed, there is nothing else can shoot forth, nor should any thing be expected, but deadly and horrible fruit; since nothing else from such a seed as this can ever proceed, but what is most terrible: such as is the image of Satan, the offspring of Belial, and the children of the devil; for it is here even as it is in all other seeds. And just as there are in any other seed, no matter how small soever it be, contained after a wonderful and hidden manner the nature and properties of the whole plant or vegetable; the perfect standard and dimensions of its nature; the thickness, the length, the breadth thereof, and all its proportions in miniature, as also the branches, the leaves, yea, the flowers: And in a word, the very whole make and tree, with all the numberless fruits thereof. Even so in the same pestilent and deadly seed of the serpent, that is in Adam's self-love and disobedience, which, by fleshly generation, has passed into all his posterity, as by inheritance, there lies hid the tree of death, or the great death-bearing tree, with all its branches, its leaves, and its flowers; also with the innumerable fruits of unrighteousness growing on it: And in short, within it secretly lies the whole image of Satan, together with all the notes, characters, and properties of that diabolical image.

§ 8. Again consider, I pray, but with attention, a little infant in his mother's arms; and observe in him, how even from the cradle, yea, from the very womb, this natural corruption begins to display itself; and how especially self-will and disobedience will here discover themselves, by breaking forth early into act, and witnessing to the hidden root from whence they proceed. Consider him as he shall grow up, take notice of him step by step, and observe in the young strippling, a natural

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selfishness, and inbred ambition, an appetite for worldly glory, a love of applause, a pursuit of petty revenge, a disposition to lying, dissimulation, and other such like qualifications. Then there comes a troop. And you may now observe in him, conceitedness, arrogancy, pride, blasphemy, vain oaths, direful curses, frauds, cheats, scepticism, infidelity, contempt of God and of his holy word; with disobedience to parents and magistrates: yea, moreover, wrath, contentiousness, hatred, envy, revenge, murders, and all kinds of cruelty whatever, especially if outward scandals and occasions do but present themselves, which do the office, of midwives, as it were, to the birth of the Adamical corruption: call forth into act the diabolical seed, and nourish, and serve upon all turns, the itch of depraved nature.

§ 9. Since by this means, there may in him be seen to sprout out wantonness, unclean thoughts and imaginations, filthy discourses, polluted gestures, and all the works of the flesh: You shall see also breaking out in him, as occasions are further presented, drunkenness, rioting, and all manner of intemperance both in food and raiment, with fickleness, humoursomeness, and delicateness; and all that may please, either the lust of the eye, or the gust of the palate, with the pride of life. And besides, you may observe covetousness, extortion, tricking, under-hand practices, counterfeits, sophistications, impostures, undermining of another's business: all the mystery of knavery, cozenage in trade, stock-jobbing, and the like. And to conclude in a word, the whole troop, or rather whole army of wickedness, villanies, and crimes, so various and manifold, as it is impossible to declare, or tell the number thereof; according to that of the prophet: "The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," [bringing forth abundantly the fruits of sin and death] "who can know it?" and if to these, in the last place, there be added likewise the seducing and false spirits, then may you observe schisms in the church, wicked and dangerous heresies, yea, the forswearing of God and Christ, the denial of the faith, the hatred and persecution of the truth, and

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even the very sin against the Holy Ghost; with all kinds of corruptions in doctrine, perversions of the scripture, and very dreadful delusions. All which are nought else but so many fruits or births of the serpent's seed in man, and the very image of Satan.

§ 10. But now, who could ever have once suspected at the first, that in such a young, weak, little puny infant, such a sink of all manner of wickedness and impiety should be? Or that he should have such a basilisk lie within him unseen? or, that such a wicked and pestilential heart could lie hid in such a seemingly innocent babe? I say, who could have ever once thought this, unless man himself, by his sinful, and nauseous, and abominable life, by the imagination of his thoughts, being only evil continually, and desperately bent to that which is wicked, did not of his own accord bring forth the same to light, and from his childhood, and so forward, abundantly express and branch forth what was before hidden, as in a little seed!

§ 11. O root, most vile, and most accursed! from whence there grows up after this manner, the tree of evil, bearing for fruit all manner of plagues, after its kind! O seed of the serpent, and spawn of vipers, most dreadful, most hateful! out of which so abominable a monster, so deformed and so foul an image is nourished secretly within, and thence buds forth, according as invited and assisted by outward temptations and opportunities, or as conceived by scandals. And this might very well be the reason why the blessed Jesus was so careful, as strictly to forbid, that any should, by their bad example, scandalize or offend little children; as considering, that in them the seed of the serpent lies hid; and the original principle, or beginning of all wickedness and abominations, is thereby hiddenly fomented and cherished, much after the same manner as poison in some deadly and venomous worm.

§ 12. Learn therefore, O man, to know the sin of thy father Adam, and the original corruption of mankind! learn, if thou art wise, to discern it in thyself: look into the same, not slightly or carelessly, but deeply, and as

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the importance of the matter well deserves. For this infection is greater, this depravation deeper, this contagion more fatal than thou canst express with words, or even reach unto in thy thoughts. This corruption in thee is greater than the understanding of a man can pierce into. Know thyself! and deeply consider what thou art, O man, since that apostasy of thy first father; namely, how thou art transformed into the image of the devil, from the image of God, and so art become as an abridgment of all the devilish nature and hellish properties, being made like unto Satan himself in all malice and ungodliness. For,

§ 13. As in the image of God, all the divine virtues and properties are contained, and even the very nature of God; even so in this image of the devil, which man by turning himself away from God, and setting up himself to be, as it were, a God to himself; all the diabolical vices and properties are contained, with the very nature of the devil.

§ 14. Moreover, as before the fall, man bore the image of the heavenly Adam; that is, was altogether heavenly, spiritual, angelical, and divine: even so, since the apostasy, he carries about him the image of the earthly Adam; and so is inwardly, and in the ground of his being, made wholly earthly, carnal, and bestial. Lo! he is become as one of the beasts of the field. For what, O fallen man, is thy wrathfulness? and to whom does it more properly belong, to a lion or to a man? and as for that envy of thine, with that greediness, doth not both one and the other evidently betray in thee the nature of a dog, and of a wolf? And for thy uncleanness and gluttony, do they not tell thee, that thou carriest a swine within thee?

§ 15. Nay, didst thou rightly look into thyself, thou wouldst find certainly within thine own breast, more yet; thou wouldst make a discovery there of a whole world filled with unclean and hurtful beasts: And even in the very tongue alone, that little member, according to St. James, Chap. iii. 5. A lake and sea of pestilen-

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tial creeping things, Isa. xiii. 21, 22. Rev. xviii. 2. The habitation of satyrs, and hold of every foul spirit, the cage of every unclean and hateful bird, and in a word, a "world of iniquity," James iii. 6. Yea, very often we make such a progress in wickedness, as we surpass in wrath and fury, the beasts of prey; in envy and snarling, the dogs; in griping and ravenousness, the wolves; in subtlety and cunning, the foxes; in virulency and malice, the basilisk; and in filthiness and obscenity, the swine. And by reason of this brutish nature, under a human form, it was that Christ named Herod expressly a fox; and the unholy, in general, dogs and swine; to whom it is not therefore fit to give that which is holy, as who deserve not to have pearls cast before them.

§ 16. Now whosoever shall not correct this infernal corruption of his nature, that cleaves so very closely to him, and be renewed in Christ Jesus, but dies in such a state as is that of the bestial man by us now described; such a one, I say, must retain forever this bestial and satanical nature, and abide perpetually arrogant, haughty, proud, and devilish: He will remain a cruel lion, an envious dog, a greedy wolf, a filthy swine, a venomous worm, and a poisonous basilisk. And when he shall have neglected the time of his purification here, he shall carry about with him perpetually, in the blackness of darkness, the image of Satan impressed upon him, for a testimony, that while he was in the world, he lived not in Christ, neither was renewed in him after the image of God, according to that of the holy Revelations, Chap. xxi. 8, xxii. 15. "Without are dogs, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."

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CHAP. III.

OF THE RESTORATION BY CHRIST.

Shewing how Man is renewed in Him to Life everlasting.

GAL. vi. 15.—*In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.*

§ 1. THE new birth is a work of the holy Ghost, whereby man, of a child of wrath and damnation, is made the child of grace and salvation, and of a sinner, is made righteous through faith, the word and the sacraments: So that his heart, with all the powers and faculties of his soul, more particularly the understanding, will, and affections, are renewed, enlightened, and sanctified in Christ Jesus, and formed after his express likeness, to be a new creature. And this consists of two principal parts, the one of which we call *justification*, and the other we call *sanctification*. Both which the apostle has thus excellently expressed: "The kindness and love of God toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his mercy, saving us by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." Tit. iii. 4, 5.

§ 2. So that the birth of every christian is twofold; and none can enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he must be born twice. The first birth is after the flesh; the second after the Spirit; the first from beneath, the second from above; the first natural and earthly, but the second supernatural and heavenly. The one is carnal, sinful, and accursed, as descending from the first Adam, by the seed of the serpent, after the similitude and image of the devil; and by that is the earthly and bestial man propagated. But the other is spiritual, holy, and blessed, as descending from the second Adam, by the seed of God, after the likeness and living representation of the Son of God; and by this is the heavenly and spiritual man propagated. This is the "renewing of the Holy

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Ghost," and the true sanctification, which follows the washing of regeneration, by which is given the seal of justification. Thus by this new and second birth, this happy and blessed regeneration through Christ, the new creature is formed, the seed and image of God is manifested in nature, and the man of God, so heavenly and like unto God, is, after a spiritual manner, begotten and produced. For even as the stem of old Adam is in us, so it is necessary also, that the new stock, progeny and kindred of Christ, be as truly in us.

§ 3. And hence it comes, that as there is a twofold generation, line and pedigree, so there may be said to be two men as it were in one and the same numerical person: And thus in the regeneration, every Christian truly carries these two about him; that is, the fleshly lineage of Adam, and the spiritual lineage and offspring of Christ proceeding from faith. Because as the old birth of Adam is in him by nature, even so the new birth of Christ must also be in him by grace, working through faith. And this is that old and new man, the old and new birth, the old and new Adam, the earthly and heavenly image, the old and new Jerusalem, the flesh and the Spirit, Adam and Christ in us: Lastly, the outward and inward man.

§ 4. Now then let us see how we are regenerated by Christ: Even as the old birth is propagated carnally from Adam, so the new spiritually from Christ, through the word of God; which word is like unto the seed of a new creature. "For we are born (saith St. Peter) not of a corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever." And thus blessed James, "He of his own will begat us by the (word of his faith, or) by the word of truth; that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures."

§ 5. This word produces faith, which faith apprehends in like manner the word, and in that word is apprehended Jesus Christ, together with the Holy Ghost; and by that holy virtue, force and efficacy, the man is born again, or regenerated. Briefly, regeneration is effected, first by the Holy Ghost, and this Christ calls the

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being born of the Spirit. Secondly, by faith, whence it is said, "He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." Thirdly, by baptism; as it is also written, "Except a man be born again of water, and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." Of which things let us see further.

§ 6. By Adam man came by the principal evils, such as sin, abomination, wrath, death, devil, hell, and damnation; for these all are the fruits of the old descent, nature and original: But in Christ again man recovers, and receives the chief good, such as righteousness, grace, blessing, power, heavenly life, and eternal salvation. From Adam man has a carnal spirit, and is subject to the rule and dominion of wicked spirits: But from Christ, he has the holy Spirit with his gifts, and a most quiet reign and peaceable kingdom: For such as the spirit of a man is, even such is his original nativity and property; which is a thing known but to few: "For ye know not what spirit you are of," saith Christ. Thus from Adam man has an arrogant spirit, a haughty, swelling and most proud spirit; and if he have a desire to be born again, and to be renewed in Christ, then it will be, in the first place, necessary for him to receive a humble spirit, to admit into his heart a plain, a meek, and a simple spirit from Christ, and this by faith. Thus also from Adam we, by natural generation, receive an unbelieving spirit, yea, blasphemous also, and abominably ungrateful; and therefore it behoves us, by faith in Christ, to attain a believing spirit, which may be faithful, acceptable and well pleasing unto God. From Adam likewise a disobedient, a fierce, and a rash spirit is given us; but it is from Christ we take the spirit of obedience, the spirit of gentleness and modesty, the spirit of meekness and prudence, through faith in him. Again, from Adam we by nature possess the spirit of wrath, of hostility, of revenge, and of murder; but from Christ, by faith, in the place thereof, is gotten the spirit of long-suffering, love to man, mercifulness, forgiveness, & universal goodness itself, which is charity. From Adam, moreover, by our nativity and carnal offspring man has a covetous

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heart and a spirit that is churlish, seeking only his own private commodities and petty profits, and snatching and catching at that which is another man's, but from Christ, by faith, there is obtained the spirit of mercy, of piety, of generosity and liberality. Furthermore, from Adam, by carnal propagation, proceeds the spirit of unchastity, shamefulness, uncleanness, and intemperance; against which, it is meet to seek to obtain, by spiritual generation from Christ, a chaste spirit, pure, clean and temperate: And also from Adam is communicated to man a lying spirit, a spirit speaking nothing but falsehood and calumny; whereas from Christ, he participates the spirit of truth, integrity and constancy. And lastly, from Adam there passes to us the spirit of the beasts, which is earthly and brutish: And contrariwise, there is to be conceived by Christ, a spirit from heaven, which is altogether celestial and divine; and for that cause it behoved Christ to take our human nature on him, to the end he might be conceived by the Holy Ghost, and so abound with the same spirit above measure, that of his fulness we might all receive: Yea, for this very cause it was convenient that the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and fortitude, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of God, should rest upon him, as saith the prophet Isaiah, that so the human nature in him and by him, should be renewed; and that we in him, and by him, and through him, might become a new creature, by receiving from him the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, for the spirit of foolishness and sottishness; the spirit of counsel for that of madness; the spirit of fortitude, for a base and cowardly spirit; the spirit of knowledge, in room of our natural and inbred blindness; and the spirit of the fear of the Lord, instead of the spirit of impiety and atheism. In which permutation consists the whole new life, and the fruit of the new creature.

§ 7. For as in Adam we are all spiritually dead, neither can we expect other than death, and the works of darkness itself: Even so in Christ, we must be raised again to the works of light. As by carnal generation we

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entered into the sin of Adam; so by faith, through Christ, we must attain to righteousness. As by the flesh of Adam, pride, covetousness, lust, and all kind of uncleanness are conceived, born, and grow up to maturity in us; so by the Spirit of Christ, our nature ought to be renewed, sanctified, and purged from all pride, covetousness, lust, and envy. And it is needful that we, from Christ, should draw a new spirit, a new heart, a new sense and mind, in the same manner as we drew from Adam our fleshly mind and heart, subject to sin.

§ 8. And, moreover, as by regeneration Christ is our Father, and is eternal; (whence he is called the everlasting Father) we are renewed in Christ to life eternal, we are after his likeness regenerated by Christ, and we are in Christ become new creatures. And by this regenerated birth, it is necessary that works should flow and proceed, which, by faith, may please God: and the works that please him must be all of the new birth; must all flow out of Christ, and of the Holy Ghost, and out of faith unfeigned.

§ 9. So henceforth we live in the new birth, and the new birth lives in us; so we are in Christ, and Christ in us; so last of all, we live in the Spirit of Christ, and the Spirit of Christ lives in us. Thus regeneration, and the fruits thereof, St. Paul calls to be "renewed in the spirit of our mind, to put off the old man, to be transformed into the image of God:" And again, to be "renewed, and known, according to the image of him that created us:" Also "regeneration, and renovation of the Holy Ghost." Last of all, it is called the taking away the stony heart, and giving us a heart of flesh. And by this it appears, how by the incarnation of Jesus Christ, man's regeneration proceeds: And how, as man out of ambition, pride, and disobedience, turned himself from God: This apostasy could not be done away, but by the extreme humility, lowliness, and obedience of the Son of God. For as Christ in his conversation, on earth among men, was most humble, so it is necessary that he should be the same in thee, O man! to live in thee, and to renew the image of God in thee.

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§ 10. See now, and behold the most amiable, the most lowly, the most obedient, and the most patient Jesus, and learn of him, live even as he lived; live in him. For what was the cause he so lived? Truly it was this, that he might be thy example, thy glass, thy book, and the rule of thy life. He, even he only is the right rule of life. It is not the rule of St. Benedict which is the rule of our life; not the rule of any man whatsoever, or how holy soever is this rule; but the pattern of Christ only, which all his apostles and evangelists have, after him, with one consent, set before us for our imitation. This, this is what they did alone point at. And this is the most mystical ground of his passion, death, and resurrection; even that thou, O man! together with him, shouldst die from thy sin: And again, in him, with him, and by him rise spiritually, and walk in newness of life, even as he walked; of which argument thou shalt see more hereafter, God willing.

§ 11. Now therefore we see how our regeneration arises out of the salutary fountain of the passion, death, and resurrection of our dear Lord Jesus Christ: whence St. Peter says, "God has begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead:" And the holy apostles every where lay the foundation of repentance, and of the new life, in the passion of Christ; particularly St. Peter and St. Paul: For if we be dead with Christ, because he that is dead, is justified from sin, we have then faith, as the latter of these argues, that we shall also live with him, and in him, and death shall then have no more dominion over us, we being dead unto sin, but alive unto God, through the life of Christ in us; and therefore has the former likewise given this express charge, that we "pass the time of our sojourning here in fear; forasmuch as we know we are not redeemed with corruptible gold and silver; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:" where you see the most precious ransom paid for our redemption, to be urged as the cause and motive for our holy conversation. And the same St. Peter writes afterward how "Christ his own

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self bare our sins in his own body on the cross, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes we are healed." And Christ also himself says, "Thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name."

§ 12. By all which it is manifest, that from the fountain of the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, flow the christian's true rule and pattern; and that thereby repentance and forgiveness of sins are best preached to us in his name and nature. And so the passion of Christ is both the satisfaction for our sins, and also the renewing of our nature by faith; the one outwardly, the other inwardly; both which together, and at once, are required by God to the redemption and reparation of mankind; because this last is the fruit, and the true and proper efficacy of the passion of Christ, working in us powerfully the renovation and sanctification of lapsed nature. This, to conclude, is the means whereby we are born again, born from above, and renewed in Christ: neither is the laver of regeneration any other thing, wherein we are baptized into the death of Christ; but the dying with Christ from our sins, by the help and efficacy of his precious death, and the rising from sin by the grace of his glorious resurrection.

CHAP. IV.

What true Repentance and Conversion is; and how the Cross and Yoke of Christ are to be understood.

GAL. v. 24.—*They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts.*

§ 1. REPENTANCE is the work of the Holy Ghost wrought in the soul, by which man, acknowledging his faults through the law, and therewith the most just wrath of God against sin, does earnestly grieve for the same, and wishes with all his heart, not to have committ-

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ed those things that he has done; and then through the gospel, understanding the grace of God by faith in Jesus Christ, obtains thereby the remission of his sins. And by this penitence is the mortification and crucifying of the flesh, and of all carnal pleasures and concupiscences of the heart, really accomplished; and together with the same, the quickening also of the Spirit, or the resurrection of the new man in Christ. Whereby it follows, that the old Adam, with all his corruptions, dies in us; and Christ then lives in us by faith: for we must know, that these two necessarily go together; so as the resurrection of the Spirit, constantly follows the mortification of the flesh as at the heels, and the quickening of the new man is a consequent of the abolishing of the old man. And hence, although the outward man decay, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. Wherefore we are commanded to mortify our "members which are upon the earth;" and so to reckon ourselves "dead unto sin, but alive in God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

§ 2. However, let us consider more particularly, why the flesh is thus to be mortified, that we may arrive at the nature of true repentance. We said, just now, that by the fall of Adam, man became devilish, earthly, and carnal, without God and without love: for being without God, he was also without love, whereby he calls himself; and was upon this, changed from divine to worldly love, which is to be called concupiscence rather than love; so that every where, in all things, man studies now himself, favours, counsels, and applauds himself, and sets forth and provides only for his own interest, honour and glory. And this is the effect of Adam's fall, who, whilst he studied to make himself, as it were, a God, involved thereby all mankind with himself, in one and the self-same dire calamity. And this corruption and depravation of human nature must in us, of necessity, be changed, or done quite away, which it cannot be but by serious repentance; that is, by a true and divine contrition, by faith, apprehending the remission of sins, and by the mortification of carnal

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pleasures, and the crucifixion of self-love and pride. For true repentance does not herein consist, that you put away from you the great and outward sins, but that you descend deeply into your own self, and look inward, searching into the inmost recesses of the heart and mind; turn over the secrets and closets, all the little windings and turnings thereof; change and renew them throughout, with the grace that is given you; and so by faith, convert yourself from self-love to divine love; from the world and all worldly lusts, to a spiritual and heavenly life; and from a participation of the pomps and pleasures thereof, to participating the merits and virtues of Christ, by believing his word, and walking in his steps. Lo! this is the path of true conversion; and here is the ground of that mortification of the flesh, or carnal principle in man, which is so necessary for the resuscitation of the spirit, and for our restoration from the fall.

§ 3. Whereupon it follows, that a man must deny himself, as it is written; that is, must tame and mortify his own will, and suffer himself to be led and carried wholly by the divine will; must not love himself, must not seek himself, must not esteem himself, but account himself the unworthiest of all mortal creatures; must renounce all things he hath, for the love of Christ; must contemn the world, with all its pomps and honours: must pass by his own wisdom, and all endowments or gifts of nature, as if he saw them not; must trust in no creature but God alone; yea, must hate his own life; that is, his carnal will and pleasures, his pride, covetousness, lust, wrath, envy; must lay the axe to the root of all these; must not please, but rather displease himself; must set nothing by all that is his own, must boast in nothing, must attribute nothing to himself, or to his own proper strength; must, in a word, die to the world; that is, to the lust of the eyes, and of the flesh, and to the pride of life, and so be crucified unto the world. This, this, I say, is true repentance, without which no man can ever be the disciple of Christ: This is true conversion from the world, from himself, and the devil, to God; without which, no sinner can have re-

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mission of sins, nor attain salvation. This is the true mortifying of the flesh, without which the spirit cannot be quickened. This penitence and conversion is the denial of a man's self, and is the true cross and yoke of Christ, of which he himself speaks, Matt. xi. 29, saying, "take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." As if he should say to thee, by earnest and inward humility, whereof thou hast an example in me, must thy self-love and thy ambition be tamed; and by meekness, wrath and desire of revenge are by thee to be kept under, and brought into subjection. Which thing indeed to the new man is an easy yoke, and a light burthen; to the flesh, it may seem a most heavy and bitter cross. And this is indeed to crucify our own flesh with its affections and lusts, whereof the apostle experimentally writes. Therefore they do err, yea, do greatly err, who know no other cross than tribulations and worldly afflictions; being ignorant of inward repentance and mortification of the flesh being that true cross, which we ought to carry after Christ daily; the which we are to do, by bearing our enemies with great patience, and by overcoming the disdain and arrogance of our malicious slanderers and cruel adversaries, with all mildness and humility, after the pattern of the Lamb of God; forasmuch as it becomes us to follow this example of Christ, who was willing for us to die to the world, and to be with him perfectly crucified to all worldliness, to all worldly splendour and glory, to all this world's interest and power, to all its fame and praise, and to every thing that is called great or noble: that looking unto him, we may thereby learn to endure the cross, even as he did, and with him to despise its shame.

§ 4. This yoke of Christ is our true cross, which we are bound to bear; which when we do, then we truly die to the world: and not when we hide ourselves in monasteries; nor when we make to ourselves singular orders and rules of living, we being in the mean time disorderly in the heart; full of the love of the world, of spiritual pride, and pharisaical contempt of others; of

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lust, envy, hypocrisy, and secret hatred. I say, this is not to die to the world; no, it is not. This is not the christian yoke; this is not the cross of Christ. But it is to mortify the flesh, with all things which are pleasant to it: to turn one's self from the world inwardly to God, and daily in heart to die to the world; to live to Christ by faith in sincere humility and lowliness, following his steps, and submitting to his yoke; and lastly, to confide solely on the grace of God in Christ Jesus, as always doing such and so great things for man, out of his mere love and mercy.

§ 5. To this repentance are we called expressly by Christ; namely, to a true and inward conversion from the world to God. To which also alone, the imputation of his righteousness and his obedience, through the efficacy of faith, together with the remission of our sins, is promised. So that without this inward repentance, Christ profits us nothing; for without it, man verily cannot participate of his grace, favour, and merit. The reason whereof is, because these are to be apprehended only by a contrite, faithful, humble, and penitent heart. And truly, this fruit of the passion of Christ is in us, that we may die to sin by true repentance: as the fruit of his resurrection in like manner is in us; that Christ in us, and we in Christ, may live. And hence comes the new creature in Christ, through the regeneration, which only is available with God; as the apostles of our Lord have sufficiently declared in their epistles, and whereof we shall have occasion hereafter more fully to speak. Let this suffice here to give us in short, a right notion of the blessed yoke of our Lord, and of the nature of that true conversion which is of the inward man.

§ 6. Hence therefore let us learn the nature and the constitution of true repentance, and let us not err in the common error, as if the forsaking of external idolatry, blasphemy, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, with all such outward enormities and vices, were the true and only repentance; upon a pretence that this external repentance is by some expressions of the prophets, chiefly struck at; as by that in particular of Isaiah, "let the

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wicked forsake his way," or the work of his hands. And by that of Ezekiel, "When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive," as also by that other of the same prophet, "If he turn away from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right: If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life without committing iniquity; he shall surely live." Whereas it is clear, that both the prophets and the apostles do here look much deeper, even to the very heart; whence the Holy Ghost has also said by Isaiah in the same place, "Let the unrighteous forsake his thoughts." I do not deny that this outward repentance, or repentance of works, is there commanded by the prophets in God's name; but this I positively maintain, that they, together with the apostles, aim much further, carry the matter a great deal higher; they command also that which is of the hidden man, and charge us to level at our thoughts, and to look into our inward parts; and even under the outward too they drive principally at what is inward, even at another repentance which is truly inward, infinitely more noble than the outward; whereby man dies to pride, to covetousness, and to lust; whereby he denies and hates his own self, renounces the world, and strips himself of all that he calls his own, and whereby he commits himself by faith to God, crucifies the flesh; and lastly, offers up a contrite heart, as the best and most acceptable sacrifice to God. So that we always ought to remember that the true inward penitent lives with a heart full of fears and groans, but these are always supported by a lively faith and hope; which character of inward repentance, the Psalms of David (more particularly the penitential ones) every where most powerfully set forth.

§ 7. It remains then, that this is the only true repentance, when inwardly in the heart, with earnest sorrow, and most unfeigned feeling of heaviness, for having offended a most gracious and good God, we be made first truly contrite and afflicted in spirit; and then made both

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holy and joyful, being purged and changed, being thoroughly amended by remission of sins, through faith in Jesus Christ, and so transformed inwardly from the image of the old Adam into that of the new; whereby it cannot but come to pass, that the outward life and manners must be also renewed and quite changed. But what if one should only do outward penance, or perform bodily repentance; should abstain from great sins, and flee enormous offences, and this for the fear of punishment, while the inward man keeps all the while his old spots still, and no care be taken to enter into the inward and new life in Christ Jesus; Shall not such a one nevertheless be damned? Yea, verily, I say, it shall not profit him a straw to cry, Lord, Lord; but he shall be constrained to hear that terrible voice, *nescio vos*, I know you not: For most certain, and infallibly sure it is, not all that say, "Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but only those that do the will of their heavenly Father." Under which terrible sentence of the Divine Majesty, it is manifest, that men of all orders and ranks are comprised; if they do not inwardly, and from the heart truly repent, and so become new creatures in Christ. For no other will he ever acknowledge for his.

CHAP. V.

What true Faith is: and of Justification by it.

1 JOHN V. 1.—*Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.*

§ 1. FAITH is a solid trust, and a firm and certain persuasion of the grace of God promised to us in Christ Jesus for the remission of sins, and life eternal, enkindled through the word of God, and the Holy Ghost, in our hearts. By which faith, we have conferred upon us the remission of our sins, and that gratis; that is, for no merits at all of ours, but for Christ's alone, and out

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of mere grace, that so our faith may remain fixed upon a firm and solid foundation, and we be immoveable in the Lord. And this forgiveness of sins is our justification, which is true, solid, and eternal, before God. For neither is it of men or of angels, but by the obedience of the Son of God himself, and by his most precious merits and perfect ransom; which by faith we appropriate to us, fixing and applying the same to ourselves; whence, neither the imperfections of our life, nor any sins, are left remaining in us to condemn us, but they be covered as with the veil of grace, for Christ's sake, who henceforward lives and works in us.

§ 2. Furthermore, by this solid and firm faith, it follows, that man does now dedicate his whole heart solely to God, in whom henceforth he rests alone; to whom alone he is fast united, with whom alone he enters into fellowship. He is now joined to God, and so participates all things that are of God, and of Christ, and is thence made one spirit with God; gathering from him a divine power and strength, with a new life, which has in it new joys, new recreations, new occupations; wherein are peace, lightness of heart, and durable satisfaction, which make in us the soul's sabbath, and the spirit's rest. For by this is justification, and by this is sanctification in the Holy Ghost. What other thing then is it, after all is said, to be justified by Christ, but to be regenerated through faith? For where the true faith is, there Christ verily is with all his righteousness, holiness, redemption, and remission of sin; with all his merits, justification, adoption, and inheritance of life eternal. And this is the new life and the new creature, through faith in Christ; which being a substantial change is very properly called regeneration. Whereupon the apostle, writing to the Hebrews, calls faith a substance; thereby understanding the undoubted, solid, and firm trust of such things as are hoped for, and a certain manifest and notable conviction, sensation, and experience of such things as are invisible. And so great and powerful indeed is the consolation of a true living faith in our hearts, as it cannot but convince, by arguing most

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firmly and most solidly from experience and from a great taste of the sovereign good in the soul, from the quietude of heart, and from peace in God; whereby that preservation remains most certain, and that hope of salvation unshaken, which a christian doubts not even to seal with his very life. And this is that strength of spirit, that might of the inward man, that vigour and alacrity of faith, that *parrhesia*, or holy boldness; (Eph. iii. 12. Phil. i. 14. 1 John ii. 24, iii. 21.) This is that joy in God, (1 Thess. ii. 2.) Lastly, this is that *plerophoria*, that immoveable and firm certainty, that exceeding and superabounding assurance, (1 Thess. i. 5.) for which one should even dare to die: This is that which, if any man be truly persuaded of in his own mind, and most firmly therein rooted, through the Holy Ghost infixed in his heart, and impressed in his understanding, he shall never fail: but it behoves him therefore that believes, to be lively and inward in most powerful consolation, whereby that may come to the mind which is supernatural: and he may receive divine recruits, and a celestial strength, to overcome the fear of death; and the love of the world may hence be utterly extinguished in him. Mark it well: I say, so great, and so solid a persuasion, and so close an union with Christ is heretofore needful, that neither death nor life may be able to dissolve it. Whereupon St. John well pronounces, "That he that is born of God, hath overcome the world." But to be born of God, cannot be any vain, or figurative or shadowy thing; it must needs be a lively thing, and very powerful; even something which is real, proper, and truly becoming a God. For it is wicked to believe that the living God can beget a dead offspring, or produce useless and dead members, or choose to make unserviceable organs: rather it is a certain rule to be received, that God, being a living God, cannot but beget a living man after his likeness; even no other than the new man in Christ Jesus. Now seeing that our faith is the victory,* by which we overcome the

* Viva est, & victrix, si modo vera fides.—*Faith is living and victorious, if it be but true.*

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world, who can doubt hence, that it should overcome, being thus endued with such powerful strength, and such exceeding great force? Or, that this our faith, which is commanded by God, and also by him empowered to overcome the world, ought for this end to be lively and vigorous, active and potent, over-ruling all our affections, and working in us a divine confidence, a heavenly vivacity, and an infallible and triumphant influence? Yea, how should it be otherwise? forasmuch as Christ himself is apprehended most truly by faith, and is fixed in our minds, and ingrafted in our understandings: And by this virtue, we do as it were return into God, and become intimate and one with him. And from Adam, as from a cursed vine, we are thus transplanted into Christ, that living and blessed Vine. In Christ we now henceforth possess all his goods; and in Christ, the just One, we are, together with him, justified. Even as a scion that is ingrafted into a good tree, grows, flourishes, and bears fruit; but without it, withers: So man, without Christ, is as a cursed vine, and all his works are sinful; the grapes of it being bitterness and gall: but in Christ he is blessed and justified; wherefore St. Paul says, "That he that knew no sin, for us became sin, that we might be justified before God in him."

§ 3. By this then it appears manifestly, that works do not justify; because we must be ingrafted into Christ by faith, before we can do any good work; and so this justification, O man, is the gift of God, freely given before, and preventing all thy merits. And we may as well hence say, that a dead man may see or hear, may stand or walk, or do any good of himself: as that being spiritually dead we can do any good of ourselves. As he therefore that is dead, cannot do any work, but he must first be raised from death to life; so thou likewise that art dead in sin to God, canst not perform any work to God, unless thou be first raised by Christ to life: which granted, it necessarily follows, thy justification only proceeds from faith in Christ. And faith is like a new-born babe just come into the world, weak and nak-

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ed, destitute, and set before the eyes of its Saviour, from whom (as from its parent) it receives righteousness, holiness, life, light, and the holy Ghost. And after this manner is the naked child, by the mercy of God, clothed; and his spotted garments being taken away, he receives of God grace, health, truth, and holiness. This alone therefore, yea, this only receiving of Christ in the heart, makes a man both holy and happy; and evidences that his true justification is only through faith, not through works: I say through faith, which apprehending Christ with all his goodness, challenges and makes it all his own. Then sin, death, the devil, and hell, give back affrighted; and in much confusion vanish away, as not able to stand before this noble birth. And so powerfully, so lively, and so effectually does the merit of Christ, through faith, work, and working abound, that even the sins of the whole world cannot hurt such an one; forasmuch as he is delivered from the bondage of sin unto death.

§ 4. Seeing therefore that Christ by faith lives and dwells in you, never think or believe, that this his habitation, this his indwelling in you, is a dead work; but rather that it is a living thing, a quickening principle, a vital force, a powerful working, an effectual transformation, a thorough renewing; for faith performs two things; first, it transplants you into Christ, and gives him freely to you, with all that he has: Secondly, it renews you in Christ, that you may grow green and flourish, and live in him. Neither is the wild graft indeed brought into the stock, for any other purpose, but that it should flourish and bring forth fruit. For as by the apostasy of Adam, and by the seduction of the devil, the seed of the serpent, and the diabolical corruption of his nature, is sown in man, growing up into a tree, and bearing the fruits of death: even so by the word of God, and by the Holy Ghost, faith is sown in our hearts as the seed of God; in which seed, after a wonderful manner, are shut up and comprehended all the divine virtues and properties, which day by day are manifested: From whence, in like manner as with the former, there flows

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forth a most glorious and new image of God ; and this brings forth a new tree, the fruits whereof are obedience, patience, humility, meekness, peace, charity, justice, temperance, fortitude ; and a new habit of mind is required : and so descends into man the whole kingdom of God.

§ 5. For true and saving faith renews the whole man, purifies the spirit, sanctifies the soul, and makes clean the heart : It knits this when cleansed, and unites it fast to God ; and the heart, when it is thus purged and set free from earthly thirsts, then soars easily heavenwards : it hungers and thirsts after righteousness ; it works love, it brings peace, joy, patience, strength, moderation in adversity ; it overcomes the world, with the prince thereof ; it makes us the sons of God, and heirs of all celestial goodness, and co-heirs with Christ. But if any one be without it, or ignorant of this joy, which is given by faith, acknowledging himself to be of little faith, let him beware he distrust not therefore the merciful goodness of the Lord ; but rather let him trust in the grace that is promised by Christ, which promise remains certain, immoveable, and everlasting. And although we, through human infirmities, may often fall and go backwards, yet let us in the mean while, always account this sure and certain, that the grace of God remains solid and firm, whensoever, by a true and serious repentance, we arise from our fall. For Christ is and will be Christ ; yea, he will be your Saviour, whether you take hold of him by a strong or by a weak faith ; if so you take hold of him indeed, for he embraces both alike, even the weak and the strong ; Christ is alike to all. Moreover, the promise of grace is universal and perpetual ; upon which, it is necessary faith should be founded without difference or exception, be it great or little, be it firm or weak. In the mean time, lift up your heart with hope, O soul, that art heavy laden ! for God will in his good time, and in his own appointed season bring that sincere and sensible joy to you, although he hide himself awhile in the inward ground of your heart. Of which argument I shall say more in the following book.

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CHAP. VI.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD WITHIN.

How the Word of God by Faith, ought, as a Seed, to spread forth and live in Man.

LUKE xvii. 21.—*For behold the kingdom of God is within you.*

§ 1. FORASMUCH as in regeneration, or the spiritual renovation of man, all things are in us; the will of our great God and Saviour was, that those things which in man ought to be done spiritually, and by faith fulfilled inwardly, should also be outwardly set forth in writing; and the whole new man, with the process of his formation, visibly painted and fully set forth in his holy word. For seeing that his word is the seed of God in us, certainly it is necessary that it should spring up, and bring forth fruit in us; and if out of that seed, there grow not by faith that which the scripture outwardly teaches and bears witness of, then certain it is, that the seed and embryo is dead. Hence in faith and in spirit, I ought to taste and experience the word of life; and joyfully in the inward sense of my mind, to perceive, to hear, to see, to touch, and, as it were, to handle those things the scripture dictates and declares most truly in the letter. Nor indeed did God our Father, in his wise counsel, manifest the scripture, that, as a dead letter, it should lie buried in paper and ink; but that it should receive life in faith, and spirit, and (as we vulgarly say) be turned into our juice and blood, and so spring and grow up in us to another man, even a new and inward man. And the reason hereof is, because all, as I said, is to be fulfilled and performed in faith and spirit, through Christ; even all whatsoever the scriptures outwardly teach, or point forth.

§ 2. Let us shew this in the example of Cain and Abel, whose natures, manners, and actions, if you call to mind, you can hardly avoid to understand, according to the spirit, that history. This is plain, if you sup-

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pose but in the place of Cain and Abel, the names of the old and new man, and all in like manner to be done and reiterated in them, which in the history you read: for what are these two births? What is the displeasure and strife of both? What is that lying in wait of Cain against Abel? What else are all these, but the daily strife of the flesh and spirit? And what other enmity, but that of the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent? So also by the flood from heaven, the corruption of the flesh is to be drowned and washed away; but just and faithful Noah is to be preserved in the ark, and a new covenant is then to be made between you and your God through the spiritual baptism. Moreover, the power of Babel, or confusion, must not be built in you: or if it be, it ought, by God's coming down, to be destroyed in you. You must likewise, with Abraham, go forth out of your own country; and all things are to be left, even your very life itself, that you may walk perfectly before God, win the victory, and enter into the blessed land of promise, and kingdom of God. And Christ means no other thing, saying, "If any come unto me, and hateth not his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters; yea, and farther, his own life, he cannot be my disciple;" he must bid all these adieu, rather than Christ. Furthermore, with Abraham, you must fight against five kings which are within you; that is, the flesh, world, death, devil, and sin. And, with Lot, you must go out of Sodom and Gomorrah; that is, you must renounce your wicked and worldly life; neither must you, with Lot's wife, look back. But as Christ commands, remember her, and look continually forward: that so your deliverance may be perfect, and you fall not short of so great a salvation as is set before you.

§ 3. Briefly, our great and holy God has wonderfully composed all the holy scriptures in this manner for our faith, and for the Spirit's sake: and they all ought therefore to be accordingly fulfilled in you spiritually. And hence, to this belong even all the wars and battles of Israel against the infidel and heathen nations. Nor is in-

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deed any other thing covered under the bark of the letter, and the history, than the same continual strife between the flesh and the spirit. Of this kind, and to this purpose, is to be referred likewise whatsoever is extant concerning the Mosaical priesthood, the tabernacle, the ark of the covenant, the propitiatory, and all the things which relate thereto. All which appertain to you, O christian! to whom it belongs to pray in faith and spirit, to burn spiritual incense, and to slay in you the sin offering; by presenting your body, through mortification, as a reasonable service, sacrifice, or holocaust. For Christ Jesus will have all these to be truly, really, and properly done and performed in you; and for that end has contracted them in the spirit, so as they may be fulfilled in you by faith only, and that sometimes, even almost in one sigh. For as man is a breviary of all natures, an abstract of all worlds, the centre and little world; so is he, by faith, a compendium of the sacred scripture, and a living abridgment of the word.

§ 4. And to come now to the New Testament, what other thing is it, according to the letter, than an external testimony and pattern? because all things in like manner are internally to be reiterated and fulfilled by faith in man. I say, even all the New Testament, so much as it is, ought to be in us: and this one thing it absolutely requires and looks for at our hands; because the kingdom of God is in us. Therefore, even as Christ by the holy Ghost, in the faith of Mary, was conceived and brought forth; so ought Christ in me likewise to be conceived after a spiritual manner, and to be born, and to increase and grow up even to the fulness of his stature, in all righteousness and holiness, which is the perfect manhood in Christ. Furthermore, if I am indeed become a new creature in Christ, it then remains, that I should henceforth live and walk only in Christ: that in him, and with him, I should flee into exile, being as a stranger and a pilgrim here; that with him I should exercise humility, the contempt of the world, and patience, spending myself at the same time in acts of beneficence, loving-kindness, and charity; and in

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him, and with him, should pardon and forgive my enemies their injuries, use mercy, love not only friends but enemies; should "bless them that curse me, do good, (with him) to them that hate me; and pray, (with him) for them who most despitefully use me and persecute me:" And that I ought, with him, denying my own will, to do in all things the will of the Father; and, being tempted of Satan, to obtain the victory, though by reason of the truth that is in me, derided, despised, and contemned: and that, if necessity require, I ought even to die for, and with him, after the example of all the saints; so to bear witness hereby before him, and all the elect, that he is in me, and I in him, as joined to him by faith; whereby I thenceforth live as one with him. And this verily is that which is called, to be conformed to the image of Christ; to be born with and in Christ, to put on Christ, to grow up and wax strong in him, to live with him in exile, to be baptized in his baptism, to be derided and scoffed at with him, to die with him, to suffer together with him, to be crucified together, to be buried together, to rise together with him from the dead; and lastly, to reign together with him.

§ 5. Nor is this alone, by the cross and patience, and suffering adversity from the world together with Christ, to be done; but also by daily repentance and mortification, and by inward contrition for sins committed, and a secret hidden conformity with his sufferings for our sakes. After this manner, you are therefore to die daily with Christ, by crucifying your own flesh, if you have a mind to be joined indeed with Christ as with your head, and to be united with him as your life. All that is otherwise done, is not in you, but without you. It is far from faith, if it be not thus made present to you: If it be not in your heart and in your spirit, it will verily profit you nothing; for Christ would have you to be inwardly retained in him, so to live in him, as comprehended in him, and thereby to be inwardly consolated with the consolations of his Spirit. All which, faith in Christ performs, while the word of God lives within us, and is as it were a living witness in us, of those things which are spoken

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in the holy scripture. And after this manner, and for this cause, faith is rightly called an *hypostasis*, or a substance.

§ 6. Thus out of this which we have here said, it appears manifestly, that all the sermons, discourses, and epistles of Christ, the prophets, and apostles, and in a word, all the scriptures in general, do for their complete fulfilling belong to man, yea, to all of us; not the revelation only of the doctrine which we are to believe, but even all the parables and miracles which the history of Christ is replenished with; neither was it necessary those things should have been so appointed and written for the knowledge of all people, unless they were also spiritually in us to be fulfilled. And therefore when I read that Christ cured others by faith, I promise to myself the same cure; because we live in unity one with another; that is, Christ with me, and I with Christ. When I read how he cured the blind, I am in good hopes that he will give me, being spiritually blinded, by his grace and blessing, a spiritual sight, opening the eyes of my understanding; and so of all other miracles, seeing there is the same reason for them all. Wherefore, if you are blind, or lame, or paralytic, or leprous, or even dead in sin, understand all this which you read, to be really in yourself, acknowledge it faithfully, and confess it humbly to him: And he will surely make you whole in him, heal all your maladies, and quicken that which is dead in you, that so you may have part with him in the first resurrection.

§ 7. The sum of all is, the holy scriptures bear witness outwardly to those things which inwardly by faith man should in himself fulfil: So it points out the image outwardly, according to which inwardly you ought, O man! to be formed. Faith must do all that, I say, within man, which the scripture testifies of outwardly: It describes the image of God outwardly, which must be inwardly in you by faith; it describes the kingdom of God in the letter, which must be in you by faith after the Spirit: It describes Christ to you from without, who must be within you by faith: It describes Adam and his fall, and

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restoration; but these you must find in yourself: It describes the new Jerusalem, and that must be in you; and you must be that: It describes this city of God adorned as a bride for her husband, and man must himself be this city that is at unity in itself, for God to dwell in, that so the tabernacle of God may be with men: It testifies outwardly of the new birth, of the new creature, of the new creation, all which must be in you; and you must be all this by faith, or else the scripture will profit you nothing. All is of faith, and of the work of faith in us, yea, of God himself: For this is no other verily than the work of God, and the kingdom of God in our hearts.

CHAP. VII.

How the Law of God is written in the Hearts of all Men.

Rom. ii. 14, 15.—*When the Gentiles that have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law are a law unto themselves; which shew the work of the law written in their hearts.*

§ 1. WHEN the Lord God made man after his image, in perfect righteousness and holiness, when he adorned him with the divine virtues and graces of all kinds, as a most perfect pattern of divine art, and an inimitable workmanship most accurately set forth; three things he fixed in his conscience so firmly, and there imprinted, that they could never be afterward put out or defaced. The first, is the natural testimony of God: The second, is an inbred knowledge of the last judgment, or of rewards and punishments in another life. The third, is the law of nature, or natural justice, by which what is honest and virtuous, from what is dishonest and vicious, is discerned, and whereby joy and sorrow naturally spring up in the soul. For there was never any nation so barbarous, which did not acknowledge some God to be, nature arguing and convincing this by both

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inward and outward reasons most firmly and irrefragably: Yea, they acknowledged not only that there was a God, being taught this by their own conscience; but also because therein sometimes they were grievously vexed with sharp and terrifying thoughts, and sometimes did find again an inward pleasure and tranquillity, so as thereby they collected that God was just, and ought so necessarily to be; and that consequently he was both the revenger of evil, and the rewarder of good. By which knowledge they went yet further, even to find out the knowledge of a future state, or the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, as appears by Plato, who has most gravely discussed and treated of this matter. Last of all, by this law of nature, or this inbred light, they gathered that God was the author and cause of good, according to whose nature the best and truest worship was the study of virtue, and a mind purified from vices; wherefore they even defined the chief good of man by virtue. And there were for that cause schools of moral virtues founded and maintained by Socrates and other philosophers: This being a fundamental principle with them, that righteousness is the chief goodness, and a life of virtue the chief end of man.

§ 2. Which things serve us for instruction, how that God has left in every man a spark of the light of nature, and as it were, a certain token mark, or footstep of the innate knowledge of a Deity, and understanding of his own origination from God; that so thereby man might be admonished of his Original, as God's offspring; and by following these footsteps, might so come to his Father in heaven. And most certain it is, many of the heathens were not ignorant of this truth; among these we have Aratus the poet spoken of by St. Paul, witnessing, that *we are the offspring of God.* And Manilius, who says,* "Is there any doubt that God dwells in our hearts, and that our souls return to heaven, as they came from heaven?" Moreover, as the Gentiles had this natural

* An dubium est habitare deum sub pectore nostro: In cœlumque redire animas, cœloque venire?

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testimony of God, so had they a conscience besides, which was to them a convincing argument, that as God was their Maker, so would he be their Judge also. And hereupon it cannot be but through their own fault and demerit, that they are condemned, seeing by this means they shall be left altogether without excuse. For he who knows that God is, but does not study to know him aright; and according to this knowledge, to worship him rightly, he shall be inexcusable before God, at the day of judgment, as the apostle most solidly argues. Seeing then that the Gentiles did by nature know the justice of God, and were taught what is evil by their natural conscience; and seeing also they that do evil, are worthy of death; not only because they *do* evil, but because they are *delighted* therein, and thereby have condemned themselves; it manifestly follows, that they of the Gentiles, who not only did evil, but were delighted in doing it, must thereby be self-condemned. And further, the apostle speaks of their consciences in themselves in like manner accusing or excusing themselves, as which will be a testimony at the day of judgment, for or against them, when God shall judge the hidden thoughts of men.

§ 3. But if the Gentiles shall be inexcusable, because being endued with the natural knowledge of God, they against their consciences have not sought God; what shall they then say for themselves, to whom God has manifested his written word, and whom by Jesus Christ his only begotten Son, he has so lovingly invited to repentance, most earnestly calling them, that they abstain from sin, and decline from all the works of unrighteousness, in order to participate by faith of the merit of Christ, and obtain thereby eternal salvation and glory? Wherefore every false christian in that day shall be condemned by two most substantial witnesses; namely, by his own conscience, or the law of nature, and by the revealed word of God. Whereupon the terrible sentence will ensue, Christ having declared how in that day it shall be easier and more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah, than for them; and that the queen of the south shall rise to the condemnation of

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that wicked generation. The reason hereof is, our great and glorious God made the soul immortal, and in that soul he put a conscience, to be as a witness and a judge: this can neither forget God, nor can it of itself conceal God. And hereupon follows the terrible vexation and restlessness of the soul, and consequently the pains of the damned; which also will be so much the more heavy hereafter, by how much the more, through impenitence of heart, the wicked shall have heaped up to themselves the wrath of God against the day of judgment. For even as God, by a most just judgment, gave over the Gentiles to a reprobate mind, because they contemned the inward law of nature, and rejected their conscience, and the law of God written in their hearts; yea, and contemptuously resisted it; whereby becoming blind in their understanding, they rushed violently into filthy and abominable crimes, and most heinous offences against his divine Majesty, thereby heaping on their heads the just wrath of God: so the false christians, because they have contemned both these, that is, as well the inward as the outward testimony of God, in not repenting, do thereby "resist the holy Ghost," and blaspheme God: for which cause God gives them over to a reprobate mind, worse than Heathens and Turks. And moreover, he suffers them to fall into terrible heresies, to believe and follow lies, that all those might be punished that are delighted in unrighteousness. Whereupon it is, that such filthy offences creep abroad among christians, and bear rule in their lives, such pompous and satanical pride, such insatiable covetousness, such abominable intemperance, such beastly lust, and in a word, every kind of most inhuman wickedness; all which arise out of a wilful blindness and hardness of heart, forasmuch as they are in a reprobate mind: and the reason is, because christians, in their manners and conversation, will not follow the poor, the courteous, the meek, and the lowly Jesus: but are offended at him, thinking it even a shame for them to lead his most holy and humble life. So they despise him whom God has given to the world, that they might live after his ex-

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ample, might work with him in the light, and might walk in his steps. Hence the same most just God suffers them to follow Satan, by their taking the life of the devil upon them, full of all abominable wickedness, that they might live after his example, and with him execute all the works of darkness; because they have resolved in their minds, not to walk in the light, according to that saying of Christ, "Walk ye in the light while ye have the light, that the darkness do not overtake you."

§ 4. Lastly, if God did so punish the heathens with such terrible blindness, and such a reprobate mind, because they contemned the law of nature, which was like the snuff of a smoking lamp; and because they despised the remainder of the light of nature, and conscience, or did not approve it so as to have God in their knowledge; whence it came to pass, that by their own fault, they went without their salvation; how much more true is it, that those shall not attain to it, in whose hearts, not only by nature, but also by revelation and by the new covenant, the word of God is written, and yet despise and cast behind them this grace and special favour? Of which new covenant, God by the prophet says, "This shall be my covenant, I will put my law into their inward parts, and I will write it in their hearts, and a man shall not any more teach his neighbour, and a brother his brother, saying, know the Lord: for all men shall then know me, saith the Lord, even from the least to the greatest; because I will forgive their iniquity, and will not remember their sins any more." Hear also what is said by the apostle, concerning those that voluntarily offend or sin against God, after the knowledge they have received, how that for such there is no sacrifice left, but a certain terrible expectation of judgment, and offering by fire, which consumes the adversary: For, *if we*, (saith he) *sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth*, (of the gospel) *there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a fearful looking for of* (the divine) *judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the* (nominal disciples, but real) *adversaries* (of Christ.) For if he that did despise, or

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break the law of Moses, was, without any mercy, by the mouth of two or three witnesses, to die; how much more, think you (he urges) do they deserve death, and a worse death also, who have contemned the Son of God, and even polluted the blood of the Testament in which they are sanctified, and have contumaciously despised the Spirit of grace? for we know who has said, "Vengeance is mine, and I will return it upon them." And again, "the Lord shall judge his people." Whence he concludes, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Which most heavy sentence, without doubt, belongs not to those who fall through human frailty; but to those only, that wittingly and willingly sin against knowledge, and the light of conscience, and persevere in impenitence to the end.

CHAP. VIII.

Without true Repentance, no Man can lay any Claim to Christ and his Merits.

EXOD. xii. 48.—*No uncircumcised Person shall eat thereof*, [i. e. of the Passover.]

§ 1. THE Lord Jesus says, "They that be whole, need no physician, but they that are sick:" and he says also, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Whence our Lord teaches us, that he calls indeed sinners, but that he calls them to repentance: which repentance is the circumcision after the Spirit, wherein is included both hatred of sin, and faith in Christ. And hence it follows, that no man can come to the Lord without true repentance and conversion from his sins, and without a true and lively faith springing up together with it, which may draw the penitent nigh to him. The unclean may not celebrate the passover with him: no uncircumcised, no impenitent person shall eat thereof; that is, partake of the merits of his sacrifice. Wherefore none should presume, without

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that repentance, to which Christ has called him, to challenge Christ and the merits of his death and passion, as belonging to himself.

§ 2. Now repentance is nothing else but a *death unto sin;* to the end that being dead thereto, we may live unto Christ by faith. The true repentance, I say, to which we are called of God, is no other thing than, through a real contrition and hearty penitence, to die to unrighteousness; through faith, to receive and obtain remission of the same; and through righteousness, to live in Christ. So that there is no repentance, properly so to be called, without contrition preventing it, whereby the heart is broken, and the flesh is crucified. And hence, in the epistle to the Hebrews, it is called, "Repentance from dead works;" or, leaving behind those works which work in us death. Some also have called it the work of dead men; because hereby we become dead unto the world. For we must be dead before we can be made alive again: to live unto Christ, is doing the will of Christ, and abstaining from all those works whose reward is death. So that to abstain from dead works is the principal part of repentance.

§ 3. Which if it be not done, then the merit of Christ profits us not, neither can we have the least claim to the benefit of it. For seeing that Christ proffers himself to be the physician of our souls, and his holy blood, to be the only and most true medicine of our spiritual diseases: and no medicine, though it be never so precious or powerful, can cure the sick person, who will not reform things hurtful, and such as resist the power of the medicine: hence it remains, that the blood of Christ, and his most precious death, can profit nothing to those that purpose not for the future to abstain from all sin. Whence blessed Paul says, "Whosoever doth such things, (the works of the flesh) shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven," nor have any part in Christ. Moreover, if Christ by his holy blood become our medicine, who can ever doubt but that first we must be sick, and must know also that we be sick? For the whole have no need of a physician, but the infirm and sick: And

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none is spiritually sick so as to be sensible of it, who is not at the same time penitent; and none can be sensible of it as he ought, who is not sorrowful from his very heart, for his sins. For he who has not a contrite heart, and a humble spirit, who is too secure as concerning the wrath of God, who has not fixedly resolved, and firmly, in his mind, decreed to flee all worldly vanities; but who, seeking after worldly honour, wealth and pleasure, takes no knowledge and concern of his sins; such an one is not a proper patient for the heavenly Physician to work a cure upon. Such as are so know not that they are sick; and consequently they need no physician; And Christ hence profits them nothing; for it is manifest, they apply not themselves for a cure. Therefore, again and again, let this be still remembered by you, that Christ Jesus called sinners; but it was to repentance that he called them; because a penitent, contrite, pensive and faithful heart, only is capable of the most precious blood, death, and merits of Christ. And I account him happy, whosoever he be, that hears this holy calling inwardly, and in his heart, and that gladly obeys the same.

§ 4. Now that is a godly sorrow for sins, which works repentance to salvation, "not to be repented of," as the words be. The holy Spirit produces this godly sorrow in us; first by the law, and next by a serious meditation on the passion of the Lord; because this not only abounds with the sensible documents of grace, but also has in it an earnest exhortation to repentance, and a most terrible glass of the divine wrath. For if we search into the cause of his most bitter death, what else can we say was it but our sins? and if we join to this, the divine love, out of which God most willingly gave his own Son for us, we shall have also his singular example, for our amazing consideration, and most sweet consolation; and shall be ravished with the most terrible and wonderful abyss of the divine justice and clemency. Oh the infinite extent of both! Oh boundless depths! Oh the righteousness and mercy of God, past finding out! which seeing they are so, who can, if he but sincerely

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loves Christ, be ever affected and delighted with sin, which he knows Christ had even with his very blood washed and purged? Consider now a little with me, O man! if you are subject to pride, and are a slave to ambition, with what contempt, and with how great humility, Christ Jesus undertook to repair your pride, and make amends for your insolence: If you are greedy of the world, think of his poverty, that he might satisfy for your covetousness; and cease at last (through the help of God) so studiously to seek after wealth, and so insatiably to thirst after the riches of this wretched world. He with an incredible grief of mind, and with an anguish and agony not to be uttered, satisfied for you, and so abolished the pleasures and concupiscence of the flesh: and you on the contrary, O fool! continually give up yourself to pleasures, and to the lust and desire of your own wicked heart! Oh! how evil is your preposterousness! how absurd your depravity and wickedness! to take delight, and suck pleasure in those very things which, to Christ, were so wonderfully bitter! Christ died to expiate your wrath, hatred and enmity; to atone for your rancour and bitterness, for your lust of revenge, and implacableness of spirit: this he did with extreme mildness and patience, mercifulness and long-suffering. And will you, even for the least cause, be angry, and account that revenge sweet, sweeter than life, even for which your dear Redeemer drank the most bitter cup of death itself? For, verily, so many as take the name of christians, and do not abstain from the pleasures of sin, do even crucify Christ, and make a mock of him, as it is said in the epistle to the Hebrews, they "crucify the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." Therefore it is impossible that these false christians should participate of the merits of Christ; which merits they tread under foot, according as it is written in the same epistle. And because they pollute the blood of the everlasting testament, neither believe truly that their sins are expiated by it, or have much esteem of his death, or think he died for their sakes; but count that "holy blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing;"

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and because they do "despite unto the Spirit of grace," that is, despise and repel it; and because they by their wicked lives deride, scorn, and contemn the mighty grace of God when offered; therefore, the blood of Christ, which was shed for them, cries aloud for vengeance against them; and this by the just judgment of God, which they draw upon themselves. And truly "it is a fearful thing (for such) to fall into the hands of the living God," as it is written: For God even our God is a living God; not a lifeless idol, that is not able to revenge this scornful refusal and contempt of his offered grace. Which divine wrath and vengeance, even their own consciences threaten them with, as that which will follow them close at the heels; because hearing the Son of God died a most terrible and ignominious death for sin, they yet take no care to abstain from sinning.

§ 4. And this is the cause why presently after the death of Christ, repentance was so preached over all the world, both because he died "for the sins of the whole world," and because in all places of the world men should repent. For it is written, "God now commands all men every where to repent." And that they might receive that sovereign medicine that cures all diseases, with a contrite, penitent, and faithful heart; to the end the grace of God be not frustrated and made of no effect. For after true repentance, remission of sins follows immediately: Neither is it possible that any one should have his sins remitted, but who repents; or that he should be absolved, who grieves not that he has sinned, but rather rejoices in sin. Since nothing is more preposterous, than that those sins should be pardoned, from which you never thought to abstain; or more absurd, than to challenge the merit of Christ to yourself, and in the mean time to wallow in sin, which was the cause of his death. And yet there be many, alas! who, although in all their life-time they never have repented once seriously from their heart that they had sinned, nor have abated at all of their wrath, covetousness, pride, malice, envy, hypocrisy, and unrighteousness; but rather have grown up therein, and daily augmented their sins more

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and more; yet dare expect notwithstanding the remission of sins, and claim to themselves the merits of Christ as belonging to them. Which indeed is a most blind and deplorable impudence; however they may baptize it with the holy name of faith. These are such as flatter themselves to their own exceeding great loss, fondly persuading themselves, through their own foolishness, that they are good christians; because they outwardly know the gospel, and believe that Christ died for their sins; and by this means think assuredly they shall be saved.

§ 5. But this is not faith but fancy; and you are an unhappy, and after a most miserable manner bewitched, false christian, who can suffer yourself to be deluded at this rate; for neither the word of God teaches that by this means life eternal is to be obtained; neither did any of the prophets or apostles at any time so preach; but this is the unanimous consent of all the sacred writers: "Thou who desirest to have thy sins pardoned, first repent, and learn to abstain from thy sins; and thus grieving from thy heart that thou hast sinned, and purposing to be another man, then believe thou earnestly in Christ." But how should he be sorry for his sins, who never thinks how to avoid sin? Or, how should he avoid them, who is not sorrowful for committing them? wherefore Christ, with all his apostles and prophets, teaches you, O man! that you must die to the world and sin; die to your pride, covetousness, lust, and wrath; and that you must return with all your heart to the Lord, and then ask pardon of him. Which being done, you are absolved, and made free from your sins: and then the heavenly physician respects you, and takes care of you, who only heals those who are of a contrite heart. If you insist upon any other way, Christ will profit you nothing: and in vain is the boasting of your faith.

§ 6. For true faith is that which renews the man, which extinguishes and mortifies sin in man, and which quickens him in Christ; making him to live in Christ, in his faith and his charity, in his humility, in his meekness and patience. And after this manner, Christ is to you now become the way to life; and you, in like man-

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ner, O christian! are a new creature in him. But if you intend to go on to sin, and have not yet determined to leave off your iniquity; but applaud all your old sins, the actions of the old Adam, how can you be another creature? or how can you belong to Christ, when you do not crucify the flesh with all the desires and lusts thereof? Go, then, and hear four or five sermons a-day; and every month, yea, every week, get to confession, and to the communion: All these things, verily, are far short of remission of sins; if you bring not thither with you a truly penitent heart, and a contrite and faithful spirit, which may make you capable of this salutary medicine, the body and blood of Christ. Truly it must be confessed, that the holy sacraments and the word of God, are the most powerful remedies, and most sovereign helps: but they are only so to those that truly repent of their sins from the bottom of their hearts, and that, with a daily faithful mourning, detest the way of their old and former life, fully purposing to lead a new life. For what profits it to anoint a stone with precious ointment? or to administer a medicine to a dead man? or, what harvest will you reap, if you sow amongst thorns and briars? Therefore you must surely first pull up all these young thorns and thistles that choke the good seed in you, and root out all things that hinder you from reaping a good harvest.

§ 7. So then, whosoever you are, O man! if you cleave to your sins, rather than to Christ, it is most sure that Christ will profit you nothing; for the birth of Christ is no help to him, who refuses to be born with Christ; and is of no avail to him who has never determined firmly in his own mind, to die unto sin; yea, in like manner the resurrection of Christ is nothing to him, who will not be awakened, when he may, but refuses in Christ to arise from sin: Lastly, the ascension of Christ profits nothing to one that will not ascend and lead a heavenly life. But if being converted, with the prodigal son, you deplore, hate, and flee from sin, as from a serpent, and pray from your heart to obtain pardon of God, for the sake of his beloved Son; then indeed, (and not before) beholding by the eye of faith Jesus Christ cruci-

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fied, and applying to yourself his most precious wounds, you, like the true Israelite, may with humble confidence say, "good God, have mercy upon me, a most miserable sinner;" for then pardon is at hand, and absolution is sealed to you, in spirit, whatsoever and how great soever your sins may be which you have committed against God. And so great truly, so exceeding great, is the perfection of the redemption purchased for you, by the blood of Christ; and such the perfection of applying the grace and real imputation of the whole merit of Christ by faith, and by following his steps; as nothing surely can be greater or nobler. Thus it is most true which is written, *God giveth place to repentance for sins;* that is, by his pardoning freely, perfectly, and wholly, the penitent for Christ's sake; for, it is the great good pleasure of God to exercise mercy, and to pardon sins freely. "My bowels are troubled within me as towards them, I am merciful, and I will have mercy on them; saith the Lord." Then the death of Christ is effectual, then it comes to perfection, and then it brings forth its fruits; and therefore the angels of God in heaven rejoice, because the blood of Christ is become profitable to sinners for whom it was shed.

CHAP. IX.

The antichristian Life of the formal Christian.

2 Timothy iii. 5.—*Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.*

§ 1. WHILE every one names himself a christian, although he does not perform the part of a christian, it follows, that by such a conversation Christ is both denied and belied; by it the Saviour is contemned, derided and blasphemed; by it, is buffeted, scourged, and crucified; yea, cast out as dead and buried out of sight. According to which, the apostle says expressly, that certain persons "crucified the Son of God again:" and

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these too did even boast thereof, by their deriding him, and putting him, in their wicked life, to open shame, as much as in them lay. And this is evident also, according to Daniel the prophet, who foretells that MESSIAH should in the last days be rooted out, be, as it were, pulled up by the roots, and cast out: which prophecy is vulgarly indeed expounded concerning Christ as crucified at Jerusalem. And thus it was by the Jews certainly fulfilled, when they cried out, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him." But I would to God it were only once fulfilled; and that Christ were not again in these our days crucified amongst us daily, by the antichristian life of them that profess his name, and honour him with their lips! and that he were not cut off or rooted up; so that his most holy, most excellent and most noble life, at this day, is scarcely to be found! for verily, this is a true saying, which cannot be doubted, *that where the life of Christ is not, there also Christ is not*, let there be never so much noise made about his faith and doctrine.

§ 2. For what is christian faith without a christian life? It is a barren tree without fruit, according to the holy apostle Jude, who calls the false apostles, which may be understood also of all false christians in general, "Summer trees without fruit, twice dead, and plucked up by the roots;" of which sort the world, alas! at this time is full. But which is yet no more than that which Christ himself foretold would surely come to pass, saying, "When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" Which saying of his, we are not to understand of that faith which the world is at present so full of, and which we may profess with our mouths, and yet deny in our works, (as if it consisted in no more than this, namely, to follow Christ in word and in show; and not in deed and in truth:) but we are to understand it of the new man, who is regenerated after Christ, being the good tree, whose fruit withereth not, which was indeed once dead, but now is alive again, being renewed by faith, in whom therefore the man Christ lives, and dwells henceforth by faith. This, this is the faith that our blessed Saviour meant; which according to his

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most sure prophecy is rarely to be found at this day on the earth. For wherever true faith is, there Christ is, and there the life of Christ consequently must needs be: but on the contrary, whosoever does not imitate the life of Christ by faith, the same is without Christ; yea, there can be in him neither faith nor Christ. And if any man follow not Christ, that man has no faith; and whatever he may pretend, he has not Christ, nor any part in him; for Christ is cut off from him, and he from Christ; Christ is rooted up in him, and is wholly denied by him.

§ 3. Concerning whom, thus speaks the Lord, saying, "If any man shall deny me before men, him will I deny before my Father, and before his holy angels." This denial of ours is not only transacted in words, nor is it necessary to be performed by the mouth, as when we formally renounce our faith, and deny Christ; but much more, and far more powerfully, is it then done, when in our deeds, wilfully we resist Christ, and do despite to the holy Ghost. And this is that which St. Paul calls a denial in works; speaking of some, that, being void of judgment, and unto every good work reprobate, "profess that they know God, but in works deny him." Tit. i. 16. For it is certain, that Christ is no less denied by a wicked and diabolical life, than if he were expressly denied and abjured by open words. And as it is with open wickedness, so it is also with hypocrisy, and with a specious and verbal holiness; to which purpose the parable of two sons is applicable; to one of whom his father said, "My son, go work to day in my vineyard; but he answered and said, I will not; yet afterwards, (it seems) he repented, and went. And coming to the other, he said in like manner to him, who answered, I go, lord, and went not; which of these two (said our Lord) did the will of his father? They (his disciples) said, the first," who denied to go, yet afterwards did go and labour. But as for the other, that said he would, but lied and dissembled, pray did not he hereby mock and deny his father? verily he did. And so there are many at this day, yea, very many of our false christians, crying, yea, yea, and Lord, Lord! who

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yet are the worst of all others; pretending indeed a right, but not any of them doing the commandment of the Father. And to such as these belongs the saying of St. Paul, "they have indeed a shew of godliness, but deny the power thereof." Now, what else is it to deny the power of godliness, but to betray and violate one's faith towards Christ: and so to play the heathen under the name and mask of a christian? These therefore St. Paul also rightly calls infidels, or the children of infidelity, (and of disobedience) as having no faith; in whom the Spirit (not of Christ, but) of this world, according to the course thereof, worketh. Hence then all they that usurp a christian's name, and do nothing that is christian, shall be denied also by Christ, as if he never knew them; he saying, "depart from me, ye that work iniquity, because I know you not:" As if he should say, just it is that I should now deny you, who first denied me.

CHAP. X.

How the Life of the Men of the World is contrary to Christ and his Life: And the vulgar Christianity no better than a false Christianity.

MATT. xii. 13.—*He that is not with me, is against me.*

§ 1. SHOULD any one but examine the life and manners of these present times, after the standard of the life and doctrine delivered us by Christ, he would doubtless find the life of most men to be against Christ, or antichristian. For their life would appear even diametrically repugnant to the life of Jesus Christ, and their maxims to his maxims: and the most of them that call themselves christians, would, alas! easily be discovered by this test to be of the body of antichrist. For nothing is plainer, than that the world lies at this day in wickedness, yea, in that wicked one; and that they who have most solemnly renounced it, have nevertheless

not forsaken it; but would marry light with darkness, and unite Christ and antichrist together: Since the greatest part of the world, whatever profession they may take up to cover themselves with, have in reality no other thing in them at the bottom, but the idolatry of covetousness; which is, the study of getting more of the world, and of holding fast what they already have, at any rate. Yea, what indeed is the life of all men now, if we look but to the life of Christ and of his first disciples? Ah! Where are the christians now? Ah! how have they departed at this day from their first love, and forsaken their first rule? The world is brought into christendom, and christendom is brought into the world. So the love of the world reigns every where, instead of that of Christ. Many there are that make a great noise for religion, and for the purity of the gospel of Christ: But after all, what is their life but covetousness and mere selfishness? This is the best and the most of that which is in the world, after which we so greedily run: great honour, great possessions, great pomp, and a greater name; not without a numerous train of furies, and vile and wicked passions, either secretly or more openly attending. But how agrees all this with the poor and humble life of Jesus? Or how suits so much bustle and stirring, as is every where seen, to a disciple of the cross? Or, how can so much clamour and impatience, and for the sake too of the world, be reconciled to a follower of the most meek and patient Lamb of God? But if this cannot be, what have they to do to take the name of Christ into their mouths? Or what have they to do with the profession of christianity, which they deny in their conversation? For what else, alas! does the life of the men of this generation shew, but a sordid, unchristian temper, and a base and earthly habit of mind; but avariciousness and self-interest, but worldly-mindedness and contempt of Heaven and heavenly things; but the lust of the flesh and the wandering of the eyes; but the concupiscence of the heart, and the ambition of the head; but the pride of life, and affectation of grandeur; but vain-glory and presumption; but the politics of the world, and the wisdom which cometh not from above, but beneath; but

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the restless pursuit after shadows, and senseless hunting after fame and glory; but a thirst for those things which never can satisfy, and an hunger for the serpent's food, even for dust; but the deifying of reason, and the degrading of the word of God; but infidelity and irreligion; but false valour, and despicable cowardice; but inconstancy and time-serving; but ingratitude and disloyalty; but disobedience and refractoriness; but wrath and furious strivings; but wars and seditions, civil and ecclesiastical; but discords and contentions, both from within and without; but the fire of jealousy, and the burning of revenge; but secret hatreds and envyings; but implacableness of malice, and incorrigibleness of injustice; but insincerity and hypocrisy; but wicked deceits and frauds; but treacherous backbitings and calumnies; but lies and perjuries; but all manner of uncleanness, and all manner of unrighteousness: In a word, the whole life of the children of this generation is made up entirely of these ingredients, viz. the love of the world, with self-love, self-honour, and self-seeking; or to say all in one, *covetousness*: So that they are generally lovers of the world rather than of God; all seeking their own, not their neighbour's good, and greatly affecting for themselves honour, profit, and pleasure in this life.

§ 2. Now to this doubtless the life of Christ is most opposite, and can with it have no communion: which life, so contrary to that of the world, is nothing else in truth, but the most pure and sincere love of God and of men; as variously branching itself forth in humanity, in friendliness, in courtesy, in beneficence, in meekness, in patience, in obedience to the death, in mercifulness, in righteousness, in veracity, in simplicity, in purity, in chastity, in sanctity, in contempt of the world, and of worldly honours, in refusal of wealth and pleasures, in denial of ourselves, in the bearing of the cross continually, with all manner of tribulation and affliction, for Christ's sake, and in the daily study and thirst after the kingdom of God, and consequently in an inexpressible desire to fulfil in all things the divine will. Behold! this is the life of Christ in man, to which so greatly is

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opposed the false christianity: This, this is to be with Christ, and for Christ; and to be redeemed from the number of them that are without Christ, and against Christ.

§ 3. So then he that is not with Christ, is accounted as he that is against Christ; and he that stands not in the will of God together with him, as he that withstands God; for "he that is not with me," saith our Lord, "is against me." But the modern life of persons outwardly professing christianity, is not with him; and therefore it is against him: It has no communion with Christ, but is contrary to him; that is, not christian, but antichristian. For now most men are at discord with Christ; and hardly are there any who are of one soul, one will, one mind, and one spirit with Christ: And none but such as these ever can be Christ's, or be rightly called by his name, and accounted for christians; concerning whom, therefore, the apostle bears witness, saying, "but we have the mind of Christ," (1 Cor. ii. 16.) And again in another place, he gives this warning to the same effect, viz. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Jesus Christ," Phil. ii. 5. which some also render, but more externally, have the *same manners* with Christ. Wherefore all the children of the world, forasmuch as they have not in them the mind which was in Christ Jesus, nor the same manners and conversation which he had, when he appeared in our mortal flesh; let them never so much call themselves christians, let them never so much boast of their faith, or presume upon their orthodoxy, despising others that are better than themselves; undeniably are not with, but are against Christ. But now he that is not with Christ, according to the principles we have been taught of him, is an antichrist. He may not be so in doctrine, but he is so certainly in life.

§ 4. And this being so, in what place of the earth, I beseech you, shall we find true christians? The number of them may well be called a *little flock*, as it is by the Lord himself: With whom the prophet Isaiah agrees, when he compares the faithful assembly of Sion, that is, the true church, to a little "cottage in a vine-

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yard," and to a watch-tower or lodge, in a garden of cucumbers; as likewise to a besieged, or rather, wasted city. And so also Micah, when he compares it to a "cluster of grapes;" which grapes the gatherers left, by negligence, in the vineyard, saying, "Wo is me, for I am as when they have gathered the summer-fruits, with grape-gleanings of the vintage; there is no cluster to eat; the good man is perished out of the earth, and there is none upright among men." And blessed David likens it to a solitary turtle, to a little sparrow, hiding itself under the eves of the house; to a pelican in the wilderness, and to a night-owl in the desert; and to one remaining amongst the rubbish of a destroyed city, or ruinous heaps of an once glorious palace or temple; such seems to be the state of christianity at this day in the world. Oh! how few are the true christians! And where are they to be found? Oh! that we could but tell who they are, and by what outward mark we might know them!

§ 5. God only knows where, and who these be; but whosoever they are, certainly Christ both is and will be with them "even unto the end of the world;" neither will he ever leave them without sufficient succour, or encouragement, according to his word, "I will not leave you comfortless:" for the Lord knoweth his, and those that be his Christ's: And whom he is said to know them he takes special notice of, and distinguishes signally from others. Amongst whom, if any one would be, the apostle's admonition must be had in remembrance, which is, that all depart from their sins who usurp to themselves the name of Christ: And therefore, "let every one that nameth the name of Christ, (says he) depart from all iniquity." But as for them, that are not so minded, let them even get some other name which may suit with them better. Nevertheless, the foundation of God stands sure, with respect to all them that hear his call, and abide in his will, having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." And every one that is so, will depart from iniquity; and not name his name without witnessing to his life.

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CHAP. XI.

Whosoever does not imitate the Life of Christ has not yet seriously repented: Neither is such an one to be reputed a Christian indeed, or a true Child of God. Wherein is shewed what the New Birth is, and what the Yoke of Christ.

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1 PET. ii. 21.—*Christ hath left us an example that we should follow his steps.*

§ 1. GOD the Father Almighty gave us his Son, that he might be our Prophet, our Teacher, and our Master or Tutor: Whom therefore he commanded us to hear, by the heavenly voice, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Which office the Son of God did accordingly most punctually execute, not in words only, but by the example of a most holy and unspotted life, as became a true teacher that was from heaven; and discharge, without fainting, in the fullest and most perfect manner possible. Whereupon St. Luke says, "the former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and to teach, until the day that he was taken up, or ascended, into heaven," Acts i. 1, 2. Where it is strictly to be observed, that the blessed evangelist places doing before teaching, as if it were not enough to join deeds and doctrine together, thereby signifying that they ought never to be separated; but it were also of absolute necessity for the former to have the precedence of this, in any one that should ever attempt to set up for a teacher sent from God. For it certainly behoves every true teacher, who would teach others, first to do the things himself which he teaches. Now such a teacher Christ evidently manifested himself to be, by his example; whose life therefore is the true teaching; and is the book of life.

§ 2. And for this very cause, the Son of God became man, and was conversant among men upon earth, that so he might shew us a lively example of an heavenly, divine, innocent, and perfect life; and that we might follow him as a light in darkness shining before us, and leading

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us on. For which reason he calls himself, the "light of the world;" and witnesses concerning himself after this manner, "he that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

§ 3. Whence it evidently appears, that all those abide in darkness, and are never like to obtain the light of life, who do not follow Christ, by imitating his life, and walking by faith in his steps. They all remain, and will remain, in the dark, that follow not this light. And what this darkness is, the apostle teaches us, bidding us "cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light:" as if he had said in one word, *repent*. For we comprehend both the one and the other of these under the common name of repentance.

§ 4. And we have before abundantly demonstrated, that true and divine repentance, as it is ever conjoined with true faith, perfectly changes the man, crucifies the flesh, works a transformation in the soul, introduces quite a new manner of life, and begets through the Holy Ghost an heavenly habit of mind, which is the soul's "armour of light." But that we might not be carried away by the common mistake of the world, to think christianity to be somewhat that is notional only, and not real; and to be more in word, than in effect; and that there should be before our eyes a living exemplar of the vivified Spirit and the new man: God has been graciously pleased to set before us evidently his own Son, not only as a ransom, and as our Mediator with him; but also as a mirror of true piety, as a glass of life, and as the most perfect idea of the new man that is thoroughly regenerated according to righteousness. He, I say, is given us for the very idea and form of our regeneration: He in whom the fleshly Adam, the corrupt nature, by sin never did, but in whom God always did reign: he, who being in the form of God, took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in our likeness, that there might be hereby the same mind begotten in us, which was also in him, and that God might likewise reign in us by righteousness and holiness, as in him who is our head. Him it has pleased God, even the Father, to place before our eyes; that so looking to him, we

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may be more and more continually renewed after his image. In order to which, it will be needful to take good heed to what here follows.

§ 5. Deplorable experience daily teaches us, that our nature, flesh and blood, body and soul, is all filled with every kind of uncleanness, and polluted throughout with the filth of sin and wickedness, and every abomination and corruption. All which are the properties and works of the devil, operating effectually in the carnal man; and as of him, so also (and that principally) of the depraved and perverse will, through which the diabolical operation manifests itself. For the depraved will is the root of all sins; and that being once taken away, there would be no longer any sin remaining. The power and energy whereof herein chiefly consists and displays itself, that it turns man aside from God, and averts his from God's will. For whatever departs from God, who is the supreme Good, cannot but be evil, and partakes of the nature of supreme evil itself: and whatever is thus averted from the will of this sovereign Good, by an inversion of the divine order, cannot but be most perverse; and is under the highest breach of the original constitution of our nature, as derived in the beginning from God himself. So this aversion from God, I mean the aversion both of the devil and man, produced the fall; and thence sin entered into the world, and by fleshly propagation was afterward derived from one to another.

§ 6. From whence it is evident, that our flesh and blood are penetrated with the very diabolical nature itself; and that our carnal will is tainted with the satanical wickedness, and therewith infected as with deadly poison; which poison is pride; together with lying, and the whole crowd of vices, and numberless fleshly and spiritual lusts, so repugnant to the divine nature, and so every way contrary to God; as a certain hellish ferment powerfully working in the soul, and perverting the right order of all its natural powers and faculties. And by reason of this perverse disposition, and devilish contagion, it is that Christ called the Pharisees, "children of the devil;" and to some even of his own disci-

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ples, gave the name of Satan or devil: no otherwise than as if covetousness, lying, pride, and every evil concupiscence were the devil himself, with whom the natural or carnal man is infected.

§ 7. Whereupon it moreover follows, that as many as lead a life void of repentance, but full of pride, avarice, lust, and envy, may properly be said to live in the devil, and to have the very inclination and nature of the devil in them. In a word, they participate of the diabolical nature; and they live in him, as he lives in them. Notwithstanding which, they may put on indeed the cover of outward honesty, and veil themselves under a fair shew of moral virtues and accomplishments, and may make a very specious ostentation of piety; while nevertheless inwardly, and in their hearts, they remain still devils, according to the saying of Christ to the Jews: which, though it be a dreadful thing to speak, yet it is nothing but the truth, a truth confirmed both by the word and by experience.

§ 8. Seeing therefore that our nature is so extremely and miserably depraved, so utterly corrupted, so abominably perverted by the evil one, and so entirely vitiated by the chief evil in all its springs; there is no less than an absolute necessity that it should be corrected in good earnest, that it should be amended thoroughly, and that for this end it should be renewed wholly, since it is impossible for it to be otherwise effected; that is, without such a total renovation. But now how shall this be wrought? Why, after this manner. As the chief evil has invaded our nature, and intimately tainted it, so must the chief good, in like manner, pervade and tincture this our nature, that it may be made like to it. That, I say, which the chief evil had corrupted, by mingling itself with it, can no otherwise be corrected but by a thorough and vital penetration of the chief Good, even of God himself, who for that very purpose took on him our human nature.

§ 9. Now then the Son of God became man, not for his own, but for our sake; that he hereby, reconciling us by himself to God, might make us partakers of the

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sovereign good; having purged us and sanctified us from evil for that end. For as much as it behoves that which is to be sanctified, that it be sanctified by God, and with God. And as God is personally in Christ, so ought we with God, through him, to be united by faith; so that we may live in God, and God in us; Christ in us, and we in Christ; and that the divine will, lastly, may be in us, and we in it, so that we may be made the righteousness of God in Christ, 2 Cor. v. 19, 20. Which is the only reason and means for which and whereby Christ Jesus administers medicine to our most corrupted and infected nature. And so much the more powerfully as this medicine operates in man, so much more deeply it works for certain upon the distemper, and destroys and plucks up the hidden evil sticking in nature.

§ 10. But oh! how blessed is the man in whom Christ is all, and does all! whose will, thoughts, and words, are the will of Christ, the thoughts of Christ, and the words of Christ; whose mind, lastly, is the mind of Christ, according to that of the apostle, "We have the mind of Christ." And so indeed it must needs be; because the life of Christ is that new life, yea, the new man. It is the new man indeed living in Christ after the Spirit; it is the new and heavenly nature that must be put on by faith; it is the putting off the old man, or nature, by a death unto sin; it is a life of righteousness in the regenerated soul, which is hidden with God in Christ. And whosoever lives this hidden life in Christ, according to the Spirit, is that happy and blessed person who has overcome the wicked one; and is translated from darkness to light, and from death to life; for he lives now in God, and Christ is henceforth become his very life. So that whereas the first and old Adam was before in him as a *living soul;* the second and new Adam is hereby made to him a *quickening spirit.* Thus his meekness is the meekness of Christ; his obedience is the obedience of Christ; his patience and humility are the patience and humility of Christ; and lastly, his life itself is no other than that of Christ, by whom, and in whom,

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he lives. And this is that new creature, which is created after God, and that life of Christ in us, whereof St. Paul so experimentally and savourily speaks, saying, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." This is to live by the faith of the Son of God; this is to follow Christ truly; this is to walk in the light of his life, and to bring forth the fruits of repentance. For by this method the old man is destroyed; and the carnal life declining, and setting, the new spiritual and heavenly life arises, and breaks forth as out of a cloud, in its full lustre. And whoever has this life in him, is a real christian; he is a christian not in word, but in deed; not in shew, but in truth; and not in name, but in nature. He is a member incorporated in Christ, a true child of God, begotten of God and Christ, renewed in Christ, and after his image quickened by faith.

§ 11. And notwithstanding, that while our inward man lives in flesh and blood, we can never obtain the top of perfection; nevertheless it is meet and necessary, that we should continually strive at least for it, and aspire after it; and that we should from the inmost ground of our soul, and with our whole heart and mind earnestly pant and breathe, wish and long, endeavour and study, that the kingdom of Christ, not of Satan, may come into us, and that we may lead the life of Christ upon the earth, by his Spirit living in us, and bearing in us the dominion. Let then all our counsels, all our contrivances, all our cares, and all our inward groans and prayers, still aim at this; and let this be all our strife, how we may more and more mortify the old man, by daily repentance, as a preparation to the attainment of this high prize. For so much as any one dies to himself, even so much Christ lives in him; so much of corruption as is done away by the Holy Ghost, even so much of divine grace is introduced in the room thereof; so much as the flesh is crucified, even so much is the spirit quickened; so much as the works of darkness are destroyed, even so much is a man enlightened; so much as the outward man perishes and is put to death, even so much is the inward man renewed and invigorated; and so much as any one loses of his depraved affection, with

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the carnal life, even so much gains he of undefiled love, with the spiritual life. For the decrease of the animal life and love is the increase of the divine; and by how much the affections of the former, such as self-love, ambition, wrath, covetousness, and voluptuousness, are lessened and wasted; by so much are the contrary affections of the spiritual and divine life in the soul, such as self-denial, humility, love, contentment, and patience, strengthened and augmented. And as those pass away and die, by the bringing in of these; so is the evil one in proportion cast out; and he being cast out, Christ comes in, and lives and reigns in the heart. The farther then a man's heart departs from the world, from the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life, so much more there is of God, of Christ, and of the Holy Ghost, which flows into him; and so much more deeply do they enter him, and more intimately and profoundly penetrate him. To conclude all, so much the more as nature, flesh, darkness, and the world, domineer in man, so much the less is there of grace, of spirit, of light, and of God found in him. And so on the contrary. For,

§ 12. This new kind of life is enmity to the flesh, and is its most bitter cross. Because it is that whereby it is subdued, coerced, brought under the yoke; and with all its desires and lusts crucified. But yet this is that alone wherein the whole power, efficacy and fruit of true repentance must be owned to consist. For it is the inclination of flesh and blood, to lead a lawless and dissolute life, according to its own will and humour, without control, amidst pleasures and all sorts of voluptuousness; it is this, and nought else, that it finds sweet and pleasant. The life of Christ is to the flesh death itself, and to the old man a most heavy cross, and an insupportable burthen; but to the new and spiritual man it is an easy yoke, a light and pleasant burden, and a most still and quiet sabbath. And verily, the true rest and spiritual sabbath of the soul is sought for in vain elsewhere, than in the faith of Christ, and in his meekness, humility, patience, and charity. Therefore he also himself has said, "Ye shall find rest to your souls:" and likewise,

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"I will give you rest." This we shall surely find and obtain, as he has plainly told us, by coming to him by faith, by taking his yoke upon us, and by learning of him, according to that copy which he has set us: every thing by this means will be made easy and light. Verily, he that loves Christ, will not think it bitter to suffer death itself for Christ: yea, rather, it will be to him exceeding great joy. And this is that sweet yoke of our Lord, that we are commanded to take on us, that our soul may be refreshed and eased; and may, being unyoked from that of sin, find a divine quiet and repose.

§ 13. Whosoever therefore has a mind to yield himself obedient to this command of taking up Christ's yoke, and of imitating his life with all diligence and care; let him see well to it that, in the first place, he shake of the devil's yoke, by that strength which is given from above for that end; and repress the impetuousness of the animal life, that the flesh may not proceed to insult the spirit as it has formerly done. All must now be brought under the obedience and yoke of Christ, and be subjected henceforth to the wise and righteous discipline of his law: that is, the will and understanding, reason and appetite, with all the carnal and Adamical desires which reigned in the mortal body. Rom. vi. 12.

§ 14. This flesh indeed of ours is well pleased to be honoured, respected, courted, praised, and to abound with riches and pleasures: But to reduce all these under the yoke and discipline of Christ; to prefer ignominy, contempt, and poverty before them; yea, to count himself altogether unworthy of all those things which are great and splendid in the eye of the world, is the cross of Christ, whereby the flesh is crucified. And in this is made to appear the very humility of Christ, and his most noble life, that a man should generously despise these things, which the world so greedily gaps after. Surely this is no other than the sublimity of the mind of Christ, which can trample these grandeurs and pleasures under foot. This is that yoke and burden which are so easy, and light to the Spirit: that law, the law of love, the commandments whereof are not grievous, but delightful and pleasant. Lo! this is the way of Christ, and

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no other: walk ye therefore in it. For what else was the whole life of Christ, but holy poverty, extreme contempt, and most sharp persecution? who came not into the world that he might be served, but that he might serve us, even us; and for our sakes took upon him the "form of a servant," making himself of no reputation, though he was the Son of God: as coming into flesh not to be ministered unto, but to minister: and to give his very life, even his own most precious blood, for an atonement of our sins, and for a ransom of as many as should yield to follow him in the regeneration.

§ 15. It is the property of the animal man, to pursue after honours, and to hunt after all such things as appear great: but the spiritual man, on the other side, loves the humility of Christ, cleaves to it, and longs to be made nothing of. And whereas almost all men earnestly desire to excel others, or to be preferred and honoured before them, and covet to be thought somebody, that is, somewhat above others; there is hardly one found that covets to be reputed as nothing, or to be looked upon as no body. This, this belongs to the rule of Christ; as the first to that of Adam. The carnal man hence, who walks only according to this Adamical rule and custom, and has not yet learned what Christ is, (being without experiencing what humility, meekness, and charity are) accounts it a folly to live as Christ lived, and thinks those only wise that live after their own wills, freely indulging their appetites, and securely taking their fill of whatsoever their hearts may wander after. Such an one, even then while he most of all lives in the devil, or leads a devil's life in flesh, is so blinded with the thick darkness over-clouding his mind, as looking upon his own life, he most foolishly applauds himself in it; and is so captivated therewith as to think, that it is the best and most pleasing of any. And thus it is, that these poor and wretched men, by giving themselves up to follow the foolish light of carnal wisdom, both fall themselves into dangerous and pernicious errors, and lead others in like manner into the same, to their common ruin: whereas, on the contrary, those whom the true and eternal light has illuminated, are so far from being

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attracted hereby, that they are struck with the utmost horror of mind, when they but cast their eyes upon the pomps and gaudy shews of the world, upon the ambition and pride, upon the wrathfulness and revenge, and upon the intemperance and voluptuousness, and such other like fruits of the carnal life; and so flee from them with disdain. And this causes them, from their inmost souls, to sigh out their complaints, in some such manner as this; "Good God! say they, how far is this from Christ? Oh! how far from the knowledge of Christ is the man that does thus! How far from true repentance! How far from genuine christianity! And how far, lastly, from the disposition and nature of the new birth, or the nativity of the sons of God! For he lives still; ah! he lives still in Adam, in the old creature, yea, in the prince of darkness. For to offend presumptuously, and greedily to rush upon sin, is nothing less than, as has been said, to live in the devil."

§ 16. In whom therefore the life of Christ is not found, the same is void of true repentance: neither is he a true christian, nor in consequence thereof a child of God. Nay, more than that, he is one wholly ignorant of Christ; for he who would rightly know Christ, both as the Saviour of the world, and as the exemplar of life, must know him to be mere love: must be acquainted with him, as he is mere meekness and mildness, and must experience him to be mere patience and humility; by beholding the lively copy hereof in his own heart. These virtues then of Christ you must needs have within you, and must have a most deep love and sense of them in the centre of your heart, if you would know him truly. Since as a plant by its savour and smell, which it sends forth from itself, discovers of what nature it is, even so in like manner is the knowledge of Christ in you to be discovered by the sweet and precious odour which is sent out from it. And so ought you to know and savour Christ, as, by the mediation of a certain vivifying virtue and power flowing forth from him into you, and by the transition of a sort of spiritual fragrancy, or most rich heavenly essence and tincture, into your own nature, (as it were after the manner of a secret divine eman

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ation;) you may most inwardly and centrally taste him in yourself: and may hence by experience, be certain, that he is a most fragrant and odoriferous stock of all sweets, and a most precious (though hidden) manna of all delicate and lovely tastes; from which your soul may draw forth new strength and vital spirits continually, as also singular joy, solace, and quiet. Lo! after this manner man is made to taste how sweet the Lord is! so is the truth known, so is the supreme and eternal Good perceived; so is it relished! then also is there a sensible and experimental demonstration made, that the life of Christ vastly excels and transcends every other life in goodness, in pleasantness, in sweetness, in dignity, and in tranquillity; yea, that it most sweetly conspires with life eternal itself, as being properly the beginning of it here upon earth.

§ 17. Seeing therefore that nothing is better than the life of Christ, nothing pleasanter, nothing sweeter, nothing more honourable, or fuller of more solid satisfaction and peace; nothing certainly ought to come into competition with it. But as it exceeds all others in its super-excellent worthiness, and most noble dignity; so likewise is it above all to be desired, and most earnestly, beyond all, to be wished, longed, and sought for by fervent breathings and prayers. And as nothing can be more likened and compared to the everlasting life of the blessed; so he that likes their communion, and the enjoyment of that life which they live in heaven, can never certainly dislike this. He, on the contrary, in whom the life of Christ is not, and is empty of this saving and experimental knowledge, not savouring the things which are Christ's, cannot know what the peace and tranquillity of eternal life is, what also the sovereign good is, what the everlasting truth, what the imperishable word, what the true quietude and joy of the soul, or what, lastly, the true light and the true love are: seeing that all these are no other than Christ himself; and he that has Christ, has them: for Christ is all these to him that believes in, and adheres to, him alone. Whence his beloved disciple bears witness also hereof, saying, "Every one that loveth, is born of God,

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and knoweth God;" but "he that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love. And hence,

§ 18. It is manifest, that the fruit of the new birth, which is born of God, as likewise the new life and creature itself, whence this proceeds, must not be supposed to consist in any vanishing words, how sound soever they may be; or in an external form, and plausible shew of godliness, though never so specious, but in an abiding substance, in the sovereign virtue and power of the mind, the very truth and fountain-life of all the virtues besides; even in love, which is God. For of whomsoever any one is born, it is necessary he should have the very same natural properties and essential qualities, and bear the same expressed image and character in his person, as he who begat him to life: so he then that says of himself, he is born of God, let him demonstrate this by love; for as much as "God is love." And as he is love, whosoever hence "dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." Which is the demonstration of this new and heavenly birth, shewing that it proceeds of God, and in his exact image and likeness; for love is of God, and hereby do we express *Our Father, which is in heaven;* whom without this it is impossible ever to express, or to have the least title to call him by that gracious name of Father.

§ 19. In like manner, the knowledge of God consists not in words, or in a certain shadowy and superficial science; but in a lively, amiable, pleasant, and most sincere and sweet sensation, a most pure and untainted pleasure, through faith gently insinuating itself into all the corners and recesses of the heart, and innermost senses and powers of the mind, and quietly pervading and penetrating the same with an inexpressible divine sweetness. Oh! what is it to be filled with the very sweetness of God himself, by the means of such an amorous faith! This, I say, even this is the true, living, and efficacious knowledge of God; whereof the psalmist in spirit speaks, saying, "My heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God." And again, in another place, "Thy loving kindness (in this internal divine sensation of a

loving soul) is better than life itself," or than lives; that is, all other lives beside the divine life. Where it is plain, that this can be only meant of that lively joy and sweetness of divine experimental knowledge, which is infused into a faithful heart, and is shed abroad through the same, as most sweet ointment. And thus at length man lives in God, and God in man! Thus a man knows God in truth, and is known of God.

CHAP. XII.

A Christian ought to die to himself, and live to Christ.

2 COR. V. 15.—*Christ died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves: But unto Him who died for them, and rose again.*

§ 1. OVER and above that this sentence is full of exceeding consolation, whilst it is hereby manifested that Christ died for all men: it contains likewise in it, a most wholesome doctrine concerning the way and method of the christian life; which is, how we ought to live not *to ourselves*, but to Him who died for us. For to live to Him, before we be dead to ourselves, and to the world, is utterly impossible. If therefore you have a mind to live in Christ, you must be dead to all the desires of the world; and if you have resolved to live not to yourself, but to Christ, and for Christ, then must you for his sake be ready to renounce your own natural life, with all that thereto belongs. But if you are rather inclined to live to yourself, and to the world, it naturally follows, that you must, in order hereto, renounce presently, all communion and commerce with Christ. For what communion hath light with darkness, or Christ with the world? and what concord or agreement can the spirit have with the flesh?

§ 2. Now there are *three* kinds of death: the one is *spiritual;* the other is *natural;* and the third is *eternal.* Of the first of these speaks the apostle, both in this text

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and elsewhere, frequently; which is, when a man dies daily to himself; that is, by a death to carnality, avarice, pride, voluptuousness, wrath, and such like other sins and passions of the corrupt nature. This death is the beginning of life.

§ 3. Of the second speaks this our apostle also, writing to his Philippians, in this manner, "To me to live is Christ; and to die is gain." As if he should have said, even then when a christian shall pass through the natural death, Christ still remains his life; and thus death is hereby great gain and advantage to him. For in that he exchanges, by means of this, a short and miserable life for an eternal and blessed one, and earthly and transitory goods for those that are heavenly and perpetual; this cannot but be a most gainful exchange to him. And Christ having been his life here, then when he comes to be translated into the arms of his beloved, and to be called up from death to life eternal; whether it be gain for such an one to die, or to leave this world of sin and misery to go to him, none can doubt.

§ 4. But whosoever shall moreover be pleased to accommodate this saying to the first sort of death, that is, the spiritual also, he shall not in my opinion err. For thrice happy and blessed is that soul, to whom "to live is Christ." I mean the soul wherein Christ lives; or that has in her the life of Christ, by a most lively copying after the original graces which shine so bright in him, but especially his humility and meekness. O thrice, yea, seven times blessed is the man who thus lives Christ! But, alas! the far greatest part of men have at this day clothed themselves with the devil, have put on his life instead of Christ's; and to them to live is the devil: As for instance, it is pride, wrath, blasphemy, lying, idolatry, covetousness, and all manner of concupiscence; for this is the life of the devil.

§ 5. But you, O man! look about you again and again, and consider who it is that lives in you. Blessed are you, yea, most blessed indeed, if you can but say, "to me to live is Christ;" not only in the world to come, but even now in this present world also. Here, even here, let Christ be your life; that he may be so

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forever hereafter: and here to die the death unto the world, and unto sin, account it all gain. So then in both senses, for you to live is Christ, and gain to die. For is there any thing here more profitable, or more gainful than to die in this relation, by the thorough mortifying of all the sinful lusts and affections in you, that so Christ, by that means may live in you, and you in him? For by how much any one dies to the world, or to himself, so Christ accordingly lives in that person. Go on then courageously, and faint not; but let Christ now live in you in time, that you may also live with him in eternity.

§ 6. Now seeing that the mind, which is weighed down with the mortal body, and distracted with many worldly desires and motions, is not capable of any true tranquillity and settled peace, so long as it is thus depressed by one enemy, and tossed to and fro by another; therefore you must in the first place die to the flesh, and be crucified to the world, before you will be in a condition of living unto Christ, or living Christ now in this present life. And this is that which the divine wisdom has taught us, and skilfully exemplified to us, under several figures and images, in the Old Testament. For thus Sarah, when by reason of her age she was unfit to bring forth children, did yet conceive, and brought forth Isaac, which is by interpretation, *laughter*, and was the seed of the promise; whereby is signified the birth of consolation, or of spiritual joy. So then unless the lusts of the flesh be put to death in you first, it will not be possible for you to conceive or procreate the divine joy of the Spirit.

§ 7. The same is further evident from the example also of Abraham: For unto him was the promise concerning Christ, and the seal thereof by circumcision given, after that he was gone out from his Father's house, and had left behind him his inheritance. But the covenant was not made to him before he left his proper habitation, and submitted to be a sojourner and a pilgrim in a strange land, looking for another and better inheritance, than that which he had quitted. Now this is a figure to us; and it shews us, that so long as any man

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has his heart fixed upon this world, even so long is he incapable of the promise which is by Christ. For so long as he has not left the world, nor denied himself, it is impossible for him to taste Christ, or to savour the things which are Christ's.

§ 8. Herod being dead, Christ returned into Judea. Which is a plain teaching to us, that so long as the mind plays the fox with the world, Christ cannot enter into it. And therefore you must die, O man! to the fox Herod; that is, to the deceitful spirit of the world, that so Jesus may come and live in you. What agreement has the spirit of Herod with that of the Lamb Christ? Or what has worldly cunning to do with the simplicity of the gospel? Or what part has he that persecutes with the persecuted? Or what fellowship can hatred have with love, or malice with mercy? Or will the Herodian nature, if alive, ever cease to seek the young child's life; or to destroy the new birth in you, while it is yet tender? See then that this be dead in you, and you be mortified to the corrupt politics of this world; that you be in a condition to receive into your heart the Author of life, and to be fed with the sincere wisdom which is from above.

§ 9. All which turn upon this, that you must die unto Adam, before Christ can live in you. Hence St. Paul, being thus dead, was now able to say of himself, *I live*, by having this life of Christ then revealed in him. Wherefore he also adds, "yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." And in another epistle he also says, *ye are dead*, when yet he writes to the living, "and your life is hid with Christ." For then every one is truly dead, when he ceases to be that which he was before. Thus if sin die in any one, he is properly said to be dead in that relation; because he ceases to be herein what he was before; whence a new turn of life is introduced into him, by the passing away of the old, and of all old things together with it; by which he is made quite a new sort of creature. For if any man be in Christ, all things are then become new to him, in this newness of life, and he himself is now perfectly a new creature, and a new man; being transformed from what he was, when

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he lived unto sin, by the effectual working of the Spirit and life of Christ which is put into him. Therefore, if we live in the Spirit, let us, (as the same apostle advises,) also walk in the Spirit." If we live in Christ, we must with him crucify the flesh with all the affections thereof, must walk even as he walked. For it is not enough to boast of the spirit in words; but words are to be approved by works, and faith to be evidenced by the fruits thereof. And it is said unto all, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: But if ye through the spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." But,

§ 10. Many are like Saul, who slew not Agag the king of the Amalakites, according as God had commanded him, but cast him into prison. For so these, in like manner, hide closely for a little while (and as it were imprison) their lusts and appetites, that they may upon occasion more secretly indulge them. But let us take heed to this; and above all things, let us be serious and instant in this matter, that so we may not only hide our sin, but that we may by laying the axe of mortification to the root thereof, utterly extinguish it. Unless this be done, we shall be cast out, with Saul, from our kingdom, and shall lose the crown of everlasting life. Thus the whole sacred writ, with all its histories, types, and figures, points out Christ and his life, as to be expressed by us in a most diligent imitation, and sets forth this throughout, as its main scope and end. Not to mention here the book of nature, or the book of the great world, without us; which also abundantly testifies concerning God, and the love of God towards mankind, and the work of the regeneration and renovation in nature through dying, with the various transformations of the same, according to the several seeds, or essential ideas and characters. So that the new man in Christ is the principal subject of these two books; that is, of the scripture, and of the creation; and to him they both have respect, as to God's chief end.

§ 11. There are in the world a sort of men not unlike to trees, who ever change with the times. For as these easily lose their leaves as the winter draws near, but as

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easily recover them again, when the season changes and becomes more favourable; even so many persons in the winter of adversity, may keep in and hide their lusts and repress the motions and pleasures of their corrupt nature; who yet immediately, upon a prosperous turn of their affairs, or a more favourable season, break out again as at the first, and as having recruited themselves with fresh strength. This is the true and genuine mark of all hypocrites; than which nothing can be more abhorred by the true christian, who is in all seasons, and under all revolutions, be they public or private, unalterably fixed in God: Who both in prosperity and adversity maintains still an uniform piety, and is equally just and faithful to all his engagements, and steadily adheres to his Saviour, taking all things indifferently that his lot has cast upon him.

§ 12. In the history of Ahab we have another instance not much unlike to that of Saul, and which likewise deserves our most serious reflection, that we be not imposed upon at any time by a natural tenderness for our inveterate enemies, contrary to the command and appointment of God. For when God delivered the king of Syria into his hands, on condition that when he was taken, he should hold him fast in prison, that so he might remain an example to declare that God was stronger than all his enemies, and would in due time require of the blasphemers of his name just and condign punishment; he, despising the name of God, and slighting his command, when he had accordingly taken his enemy in the battle, saluted him as his brother, and so dismissed him. For which disobedience, in giving life to a man deserving to die, and in letting go out of his hands one that was even devoted under an anathema, or a man whom God appointed to utter destruction, the prophet pronounces the pain of death upon him by God's appointment, in lieu of the captive king whom he had released, and made a confederacy with; assuring him, that his own life should go for his life, as it accordingly soon after came to pass. Like unto him are they who feed and cherish in their bosom, their own lusts, god's and their enemies, which are appointed to destruction,

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and so voluntarily draw upon themselves death, even the second death.

§ 13. It is as true as truth itself, that without the mortification of the flesh, neither prayer, nor piety, nor any work of the Spirit, can be ever perfected in man. And to figure out this to us the better, it pleased God to appoint that all the beasts should be put to death which approached the holy mountain of Sinai; which thing is an allegory, and is written for our instruction and edification. For by how much more ought we to slay our bestial lusts and brutal affections, if we would ascend into the holy mount of our God, would offer up the incense of prayer and spiritual sacrifices, and would meditate upon the divine word, and give ourselves up to internal recollection? And if we do otherwise, are we not already judged? There remains, therefore, a fearful expectation for us, if we transgress this order: and if we think here to spare our own flesh, we are strangely mistaken. The beast, which is our flesh, must in this case die, that so we may live, live unto God: but if this live in us, according to the old Adam, then must we ourselves die the death.

§ 14. We read that a new name was given to Jacob, even the name Israel, which is interpreted a champion, or a prince of God, after wrestling with the angel, he had beheld the face of God; wherefore also he called the name of the place Penuel, which signifies the divine presence or God's face and familiar appearance. But before he was honoured with this new name, he was called Jacob, which points out a supplanter; for so he was. And after his example, unless you, through the Holy Ghost, first tread down your own lusts, and supplant the power of Satan in the elder birth of nature, to become Israel, or the Prince or Captain of God, you will never attain the place of such a Captain, nor will ever see the face of God; you will never arrive to the blessed Penuel, or to the vision of the divine glory. In a word, you must be Jacob, before you can be Israel.

§ 15. The same Jacob, that he might enjoy the fair and beautiful Rachel, was constrained to take first the homely and blear-eyed Leah. So you, in like manner,

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if you are really in love with Rachel, if you are in good earnest to match your soul, or rather your spirit, to Christ, the true Jacob, the supplanter of Satan, the treader down of sin, and subduer of the serpent's birth, by intimate communion and spiritual matrimony, you must first take Leah, you must be displeased at yourself, beholding your animal man; you must hate your own deformity, you must deny yourself; that so at length, by keeping this order, you may be united with Christ in most strict union. But here there be very many, alas! that are deceived by the over-forwardness of their own mind, (even as Jacob was by Laban) thinking verily they have gotten Rachel; that is, that they lead a life truly christian and well-pleasing to God; when afterward, the truth being narrowly searched into, they discover that they have embraced Leah only, and that hitherto they have led a life which is altogether void of the grace, virtue, and beauty of God, and consequently such as in the sight of the divine Majesty is most abhorred. Wherefore, before all things, let us be displeased at ourselves; let us be sure to appear ill-favoured in our own eyes; and as it is said of Leah, that she was despised in her father's house; so also let us be content to be in like manner despised and hated as she was, that so "the Lord may look upon our affliction," even as he did upon hers, by making us fruitful in divine grace. And thus having put on true humility, with meekness and patience, let us think most contemptibly of ourselves, and wait in God's name for the fulfilling of the so desired union, and the enjoying of the holy beautiful Virgin, the spiritual Rachel, the heavenly wisdom.

§ 16. Consider, moreover, with what dexterity and alacrity he underwent the service of seven and seven years, for the sake of this his beloved; her love mitigating the hardness of his labour, and wearing out all that time without the least tediousness, even as if it had been but so many days. And then consider how the most faithful spouse of our souls, Christ Jesus, served in like manner, full three and thirty years in this world, a most

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hard servitude, all that time abundantly fulfilling that which is spoken by Jacob concerning his service, "In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes;" according to that which is written of him, "the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve others, and to give his life a ransom." And again, "I am among you as he that serves." And shall we doubt yet to love Christ again? God forbid. What! can we ever refuse for such love as this to serve him again, who took thus for us the form of a servant; and for the love of him who has done all this, even for us, to make war all our life against his and our deadly enemy, the world? How is it that the love of Christ does not even constrain us henceforth to die unto ourselves, that we may live unto him who died for us! because we must judge, "that if one died for all, then were all of us dead!" Oh! can there be the least hesitation in returning him life for life, body for body, and soul for soul! shall we after this refuse to fight under his banner, or resist for his sake, even unto blood? No: let us in his name defy the world to do its worst, whom we have solemnly abjured: and never be so base as to entertain the least thought of ever deserting to it.

CHAP. XIII.

A Christian ought willingly for Christ, and for obtaining in Him the End of Man's Creation and Redemption, to die both to the World and Himself.

2 cor. viii. 9.—*Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.*

§ 1. FOR the sake of Christ, you must die to yourself: For the love of him you must be willing to die to all your sins, and to the whole world. All good works must be done, and an holy and innocent life must

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be lived; but this, not to merit any thing hereby; but only out of pure love towards him. You can merit nothing for yourself: Christ has done that for you, when he made himself poor for your sake, that so you, by means of his poverty, might become rich. Let therefore this pure love of Christ prompt you to all that is good; let this, I say, be the motive of mortifying your flesh with all its lusts; and let the remembrance of that death which he most willingly accepted for you, make you also ready and willing to lay down even your life for him; and out of a sincere affection and gratitude for all his inestimable benefits, to accept the cross at his hand, and to resist the world even unto blood.

§ 2. Be not deceived; for not in tongue or in word, but in deed and in truth, is he to be loved of you. If you love him, keep his commandments, even as he himself has expressly told you: For unto you he says, "If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." "For this (as the Holy Ghost witnesses by the beloved John) is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." And our Saviour himself, in agreement herewith, affirms, "my yoke is pleasant, and my burden light." For to him that loves Christ with all his heart, it cannot but be easy and pleasant, for his sake, to want the sweetness of worldly trifles; it cannot but be a light burden to bear what the beloved is pleased to impose, to keep from a principle within the commandments of love, to forsake and to be forsaken of the world, and by a total death thereto, to live in Christ; as mitigating all sense of difficulty through the vehemency of love, and that everlasting sweetness which is thence derived. But he that does not embrace the love of Christ from the heart, being not carried towards him with a pure and sincere affection, does all things that concern his duty heavily and awkwardly, and as it were with an ill-will, and against his inclination. And no wonder then, if every thing in the exercise of an holy life, be found sharp and difficult to him, and appear always full of labour and pain. Whereas, on the contrary, to a true lover of

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Christ, not even death itself, if it be required for Him, is in any wise terrible; nay, so far from this is it, that it produces in him rather joy and pleasure: For it is the triumph of love to be able to suffer for the Beloved: and therefore it is written, that "love is stronger than death:" and as a mark of the true christianity, it is delivered to us, that we be in nothing terrified by our adversaries, the world and the devil, but that we rather rejoice and be exceeding glad, if we be persecuted even to death for his name's sake. "For unto us it is given, (saith the apostle) on the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;" and that even to the laying down of our natural lives, if it shall graciously please him, for his name's sake, to call us to so great an honour and favour.

§ 3. Consider Moses for your encouragement; oh! consider his most noble and heroical faith, whereof such honourable mention is made by the Holy Ghost. For that he "by faith, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; and esteeming the reproach of Christ (or, for Christ) greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." Which glorious testimony is given of him in the epistle to the Hebrews, in as much as "he endured, seeing him who is invisible."

§ 4. Consider Daniel set apart with his companions by the king of Babylon, and chosen out from among the captives, to attend in the greatest court of the world: Consider him standing in the king's palace, and appointed for his immediate service; who, when he was to be fed from the king's own table, and to have a daily provision both of the king's meat and the king's wine, till he should be fit to minister in the royal presence, and to discharge such offices as he was educated for at the king's cost and care, generously despising the same, as did also his three companions, with all the delicacies of a most profuse court, desired the prince of the eunuchs that he and they might rather eat pulse and drink water, because he "purposed in his heart, that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor

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with the wine which he drank ;" as did they also with him in like manner. So much in young and tender minds (and so strongly) could the love of divine wisdom operate ; with which to be divinely enlightened, was all they wished for, and all they laboured after. This wisdom descending from above, they courted early, and none but her ; and in simplicity of heart they sought her diligently, despising for her sake all the temptations of Babylon. Go, and do also in like manner. If it be your earnest longing to have Christ, the eternal wisdom of the Father, enter into your soul, take heed that you abstain from carnal pleasures, as from the delicate and rich dishes of the Babylonian court. Be not defiled with the king's portion ; be not polluted with the spirit of the world, neither be tempted to drink out of that golden cup, which the great queen arrayed in purple, and decked with gold and precious stone and pearls, even the false wisdom, queen of mystical Babylon, and mother of spiritual fornications, holds in her hand, and presents to you ; that she may make you drunk with the wine of her fornication and witchcraft. But taste not ; neither so much as touch or handle the Babylonish dainties which are set before you. If you desire to partake of the table of Christ, and to have a portion allotted you with Abraham in the kingdom of heaven, to sit down with him and all the saints, you must not partake of the table of Christ's enemy, nor yield to take your portion from the prince and God of this world : And if you have truly a mind to drink the cup of the Lord, wherein there is the spring of wisdom, and the light of knowledge, then must you utterly reject the cup of Babylon, let the appearance be never so dazzling and alluring. Do as these children did, and doubt not but you shall in like manner be visited with the heavenly wisdom, even as they were visited. And as they were made more beautiful when they lived thus soberly, and abstemiously, satisfying nature with nought but lentils and water, so that they appeared fatter in flesh and fairer in their countenances, than all the children who ate the portion of the king's meat. So be assuredly persuaded in your mind, that your soul will be more beau-

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tiful and fair in God's eyes, and will get a much better and stronger habit, and healthier constitution throughout, even so as to be partaker of the very divine nature itself, as you will after this manner escape and subdue the "corruption that is in the world through lust," by a thorough mortification of the flesh, and extinguishment of all earthly desires. Wherefore also,

§ 5. Consider holy Paul, whose words are, "the world is crucified to me, and I to the world," that is, I am dead to the world, and the world to me. Behold, I say, and consider this blessed apostle, whose life was a life of continual crucifixion to the world, and all that therein is; whereby he became with his beloved brother Peter, a true partaker of the divine life and nature; and thus trampling by faith, upon the life of this world, received the seal of an eternal weight of glory in due time to be revealed. After whose example all true christians are indeed in the world, but not of the world: and although they live in it, yet no part of the love thereof cleaves to them; they accounting it for a shadow which passes away, and which has no real or abiding substance. So that all worldly pomps and dignities are as nothing to them; all the glory of the world is no more than a little air or smoke; all the lusts of the eyes and flesh, with the pride of life, appear to them but deceit and vanity; all are no better than shadows; yea, all are in their best estate, vexation and disappointment; honours, riches, and pleasures, are nothing therefore esteemed by them, for they account them all but as dung, that they may gain Christ; and as altogether vanity in respect of Christ, they utterly despise them all. For the world is dead and crucified to them, and they to the world.

§ 6. Oh! how happy and blessed is that man who is so divinely endued! Oh! happy man indeed, dead to the world, and alive to God! Oh! thrice happy! happy soul! separated from the world, and collected into Christ! blessed! forever blessed is the man into whose heart such divine graces are infused, as may withdraw it wholly from every tendency to inferior things, and exalt it to the superior light and glory in the heavens:

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which grace to obtain it, is needful for a true christian to pray daily and instantly to God; seeing that it is not possible for a true christian to live without it.

§ 7. Wherefore as Solomon, the wisest of all kings, prayed for the grace of heavenly wisdom, and by this means obtained his desire of God, the fountain of all wisdom and grace: So do you in like manner, that you obtain also your desire, professing to you the treasure of true christianity, which is the wisdom of God. And as the humble Agur was heard also of God, when he prayed unto him, saying, "Two things I desire of thee, oh, deny them not unto me; namely, that thou give me neither riches nor poverty; but give me so much as is necessary for my life:" even so let a christian in like manner pray, saying, "Two things I desire of thee, O Lord, even these two things, that I may die to myself and to the world:" Since without these two it is utterly impossible to be a true christian. And if you think otherwise, you are certainly deceived: and you shall hear from the mouth of Christ this sentence, "I know you not." But,

§ 8. Notwithstanding it is a grievous cross to flesh and blood, to die thus to self and the world; yet the Spirit overcomes and triumphs in us over all difficulties and oppositions. So great is the force of the Spirit: yea, so great is the love of Christ, that true christians pass through all these things as a most sweet yoke and most easy burden to them, for the sake of their Beloved. And although these that are so, are hated of the world, yet are they beloved of God: For the enmity of this world, is the friendship of God: And in like manner, the enmity of God, is the friendship of the world. Therefore,

§ 9. Whosoever will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God: And whosoever consequently would be the friend of God, must not count it hard to be treated as an enemy by the world, or by the god of it; seeing that the friendship of the same is such perfect enmity with God, as the holy Ghost witnesses to us by St. James, and as our blessed Lord also himself plainly professes; that so there may be left in us no manner of excuse, in case of committing adultery with the spirit of

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this world. The words of the disciple are these emphatical ones, crying to adulterous souls, "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God," James iv. 4. And the words of the Master are these comfortable ones, encouraging his true disciples and sincere lovers, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: But because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you," John xv. 19. For as the sea receives into it, and will bear living men, but casts out the dead; even so is it with the world, that is a raging and a foaming sea. As the sea, I say, casts out the dead bodies, so casts out the world in like manner those that are dead, for the testimony of Jesus; for it will not bear them, but will reject and persecute them, and so drive them out of the world. And we ought not therefore to be ignorant, that the world is an adversary to those that are dead to the world, and that it so esteems also them: but that it is otherwise to as many as live in the pomp and splendour thereof, whom it commends and favours; because they live in it, and it in them. Let us consider then these things, my brethren, as we ought, and remember the words of our Lord, who has said, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you."

§ 10. Now he in whose heart the love of the world abides not; and in whose mind pride, covetousness, voluptuousness, wrath, revenge, indignation, and all the desires and passions of the animal nature are mortified; is not received of the world, but is cast out by it; notwithstanding he is elect and precious in the sight of God, to whom and in whom he lives, being dead as to the life of the world. For unto him indeed the world is dead, and he unto the world; this man lives henceforth in Christ, and Christ in him: And all those that are so, Christ acknowledges for his own; but to others it will be said by him, *I know you not*, as who in like manner knew him not; that is, acknowledged him not before men, but were ashamed of his life. Verily, verily, he will not know them in that day, who are ashamed of his

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meekness, of his humility, and his patience; and who despise the shame of his cross. In short, he who refuses to live with Christ here in time, how shall he live with Christ in eternity? and how shall he live in you or with you, after this life, seeing you cannot, or will not, now live with him in this life? For if you will not suffer Christ to live in you, before this world be ended, what expect you, O fool, in that which is to come? Ah! with whom will you live hereafter, that cannot live with him here? Learn therefore, O man, here to die to the world, and to yourself, that so you may live to God both here and hereafter, and your life may be revealed in Christ when he shall appear. It remains then firm, that he shall not have life in the world to come, whose life in this world is not in Christ.

§ 11. And here now strictly examine your life, O man! and see whether it be more like to Christ's or the devil's life; for certainly, with one of these you will be joined after death, according as you have here lived in the flesh, and as you have been here joined to one or to the other. Now whosoever is dead to himself, the same is in love with no bodily concerns or businesses, but is wholly alienated from them; and is as one quite dead to the world. And whosoever is dead to the world, the same, for certain, cannot be in love with the world, or with any of the things of the world whatsoever; he being now perfectly mortified to that life and love of the world and worldly things, which before lived in him. Now therefore if it be demanded, *what is it then to die to the world?* The answer is very plain, that it is no other thing than not to love the world, or the things thereof, but for the sake of Christ to despise them utterly. Wherefore also the holy Ghost says to these dying ones; "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." For we are sure, that he who loves the world is not of God, but of the world; neither can he indeed be of God, according to that divine maxim of St. John, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him," 1 John ii. 15. If he love the world, he may be also loved of the world: but

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if the love of God be in him, no wonder is it, if the world hate him, which is so at enmity with God. Moreover, if the love of God be not in him, but the love of the world, what shall he do in heaven? will not heaven itself be made to him hereby as hell? and what likewise has he to do in the world, who in his heart is dead to the world? where the heart is, there the life is also: if it be with God, then it is not with the world, or in the world: and if it be with the world, then we know that it cannot be with God, or in God. If the heart be but with Christ, the life also of that man will necessarily be in Christ: but if it be not with him, then will he have no share in him, but in antichrist; and his life shall never be found to be in Christ, but in Satan. Neither is he to be accounted a child of God, but a son of Belial, whose heart is fixed not in God, but in the son of perdition; being ensnared by the love of the world, to the obedience of the prince of the power thereof. And he that has this world's love in him, shall easily be overcome by it, even as Samson was by Delilah; and so must suffer all that torment which the world can bring upon him, and all that vexation of heart which the worldly life does, or can, produce.

§ 12. Moreover, the love of the world only belongs to the old creature, not to the new birth; for the world is nothing but outward honour, and glory, and riches, but the desire of the eyes, and pleasure of the flesh, with the elevation of the selfish life: in which the old man is conversant, and delights himself. On the contrary, the new man has no peace or rest, but in Christ alone: He has all things in Christ; who is his honour, his glory, his wealth, and his pleasure. For what can be more honourable and glorious to a man? Or, what is more enriching, and to be desired, than the image of God renewed by Christ? Or, if we seek for pleasures, what man in his wits can doubt that God gives delight to them that are his, above all creatures, and solaces them more than can be expressed?

§ 13. Furthermore, what think you of that which the scripture teaches, how man was not made for the world's sake, but the world for man's sake? Man was not made

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to please his palate with delicate food, or to pamper his own genius, or to heap up riches, or to spread his empire far abroad; he was not made to get most ample possessions, to build for himself many barns, or to grasp greedily the grounds and fruits of the earth; he was not surely made out of the dust, to be gorgeously attired, and to abound in jewels and vessels of gold and silver. Man was made to be lord of the earth, not to be a slave of it; to subdue it with all the affections thereof; not to be subdued by it, or them; not to put his delight or joy therein, as in his paradise, and to know nothing, and hope for nothing but what is before his eyes: wherefore he ought not to be influenced by any terrestrial cause, or worldly motive whatsoever; or to be moved by any thing that is frail; yea, though of itself it may seem never so good, pleasant, and precious: No, truly; for he must go hence, for as much as he is but a tenant for life, of this great world. He was not made for it; nor can he abide in it. And as naked he came into it, so naked must he go out of it again. Into it many at once are born, and as it were by heaps, promiscuously and without distinction: Death drives them all out hence again by heaps, both they that entered into it at one time, and they that successively made their entrance into it at several times; and will not suffer any of us to carry with us the least mite of all the treasure we shall here have gathered, but sends us quite empty away, if we have no other riches but those of this world: Whereby it evidently appears, that we were not created for this temporal life; or that this world was never designed to be the principal end of our creation, seeing that we live therein but as pilgrims and guests only. And therefore another cause brought us into this world, and for that we were born; which is GOD himself, and the image of God which we bear in Christ Jesus, and unto which we are renewed by the Spirit. By this then we are now, I hope, convinced most evidently, that we are especially created for the kingdom of God, and for life eternal; which our Saviour Christ has recovered for us, and to which, and into whom, we are regenerated by the Holy Ghost. How preposterous a thing then is it for any one to fix his

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heart to the world, and give his mind to terrestrial things, when we know the other to be infinitely more noble than the whole world? yea, how ridiculous a thing is it for a man to attend and spend his whole time on paltry earthly things? man, who is the most excellent of all the creatures; man, who was made to carry about him the image of God in Christ, and who by him is renewed after this image! Wherefore, as I said before, so say I again, man for the world was not created, but the world for man.

§ 14. And therefore carries he about with him the image of God in Christ; of which the excellency and nobility is so great, that all men, with all their labour and might; yea, and all angels too, could not repair so much as one soul, or renew in it the image of God. But for this cause, it was necessary that Christ should die, that so the image of God, which was by sin defaced and destroyed in man, should, through the righteousness of Christ, be renewed by the holy Ghost; and man might hence become the habitation of Christ, and the house of God.

§ 15. Now this being known and duly called to mind, if any one be right in his senses, he will never certainly compare the riches of the world, or the honours and pleasures thereof, with the price of his soul; which would be great madness. Surely he will say, "Shall I now then give my soul, which Christ has so dearly bought, for an handful of gold and silver, for the money of this world, or for the honour and pleasure which it can afford me? No, God forbid. Sure I can never be such a swine as this! For what is it to cast jewels into the mire, and pearls before swine, for them to trample under their feet, if this should not be it? And this plainly is the mind of the Lord, when he says, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" The whole world, alas! with all the power and glory thereof, cannot help one soul, since the soul dies not; but the world with all that is of it, passes away.

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CHAP. XIV.

The true Christian's Contempt of the World, and Hatred of his own Life for Christ.

LUKE xiv. 26.—*If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.*

JOHN xii. 25.—*He that loveth his life, shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal.*

§ 1. THAT a man may thus hate himself, it will be needful that, in the first place, he cease to love himself. 2dly, that he daily die unto sin: and 3dly, that he maintain a daily combat with himself, even a continual warfare with his flesh or animal nature.

§ 2. First, There is nothing in the whole earth more pernicious to man, or a greater obstruction to his eternal salvation, than to love himself; which is not here to be understood of a natural love and care, which we are all bound to have for ourselves, but only of a fleshly and inordinate love, or affection, for our own selves principally, and without regard to the order of our being, and of the whole creation likewise with us. And in this sense, the reader therefore is admonished to take self-love, wherever I shall have occasion to mention it throughout this book.

§ 3. Man ought to love nothing but God alone. And seeing that God alone is to be loved, it follows, that he who loves himself, is an idolater, and makes himself as God. What every one loves, in that his heart is fixed; and where his heart is fixed, thereto pays he his devotion. He is a servant of it, whatsoever it be, and devoted to it. Neither can we but be taken with the love and servitude of some thing or other, so as we become servants thereof, by despoiling ourselves of our proper liberties; and consequently we have, in this broken and divided state, as many lords whom we are subject to, as we have objects whom we love. But if your love, O man! be sincerely and simply directed towards God,

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then you are subject to no other Lord; then are you enslaved to no other object; and it is manifest you are hereby at liberty. Wherefore you must be very circumspect, that you follow after nothing that may hinder the divine love in you; and that you suffer not your soul to wander, or your affections to run out into any of the creatures.

§ 4. And if you desire to possess God alone as much as you are able, your *all* must you be sure to consecrate to him. But if you love yourself, and please yourself, instead of loving and pleasing God, much pensiveness, sorrow, fear, and dreadful sadness inevitably will befal you. And on the contrary, if you love God, and rejoice in him only, and dedicate yourself only to him, then will he be your sure comfort, and never shall you be overcome with sorrow, or fear, and never depressed with sadness and melancholy.

§ 5. He who seeks himself every where, and in all things, and follows after nought but his own profit, praise, and honour, never attains to tranquillity; for always something or other meets him that brings perturbation. Therefore believe not that the increase of wealth, fame, and honour in this world, is to you good and profitable; but rather set before you always the best things, the heavenly treasures, and immortal honours and glories, and contemn all such mean and passing things, and strive for this end to extirpate the very root of corruption, which hinders you in the pursuit of the love of God. For as much as in this love you shall find all the riches of God, and all the pleasures of paradise to be contained.

§ 6. Now seeing that the objects of this life, such as praise, honour, riches, pleasure, and even the world itself which bestows them, are frail and still floating away, but the love of God endures forever: That delight certainly cannot be durable, which you take in the love of yourself, and of earthly things; because it may vary upon very light occasions. Whereas, contrariwise, the mind that is firmly set upon divine love, cannot but continually rejoice. Ah! how vain, frail, and unsatisfying is all that which is not grounded upon God. Oh! how is all vanished, vanished away of a sudden! Behold,

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the dream is fled. But O christian, forsake all things, and you shall then find all things by faith. For he that finds God finds all things: But the lover of himself and the world finds not God.

§ 7. The love of ourselves is begotten of the world, not of God; and self-love, which is earthly, is the chief enemy to the heavenly wisdom: And therefore, though many in their sermons or books boast and make a great noise of this wisdom, yet remains this precious pearl unknown and hidden to us, so long as in life and manners we are far from it, and know little experimentally of it. And the only way to find it, is to unlearn and forget human wisdom, and to put off self-applause and self-love. As for human and earthly wisdom, which the world boasts so much of, you must be ready to exchange it for the celestial and divine: and must not think it hard, even to be accounted a fool in the world's eye for the sake of Christ, in whom are laid up for you all the treasures of this wisdom from above, if you love him.

§ 8. But it is impossible to love God, unless you hate yourself; that is, unless you be sincerely displeased with yourself for your sins; unless you crucify your own flesh, and mortify your own proper will: For by how much any man is attentive to the love of God, so much more he studies always to mortify and keep under the lusts of the flesh, and his own selfish appetites: also, the further you depart from yourself, and from your own proper love, through the power and energy of divine love, by so much the nearer are you hidden in God, and in his love through faith. For even as the inward peace depends on a vacancy and leisure from the outward things, so it must needs be, that when this inward peace is once established, and all within is at leisure, and the heart free from all creatures; that the heart so freed should cleave to God alone; and going back from all other things, the soul consequently must enter into God, and rest in God.

§ 9. Moreover, he that goes about to deny himself therein, shews plainly, that he does not his own work, but Christ's. For "I am, (saith Christ) the way, the truth, and the life." As if he should have said,

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"Without the way, no man goeth on; without the truth, nothing is known; and without life, no man liveth: Therefore look upon me, who am the way, which you ought to walk in; the truth which you ought to believe in; and the life which you ought to live and hope in: I am the way that endureth for all ages; the infallible truth, and the life everlasting. The royal way to immortal life is through my merit; the truth itself is in my word; and life is through the power and efficacy of my death: And therefore if ye continue in this way, the truth will carry you on to eternal life. If ye will not err, come follow me; if ye will know the truth, believe me; and if ye will possess life eternal, put your whole trust in me, who for you endured the death of the cross." And what is that royal way, that infallible truth, and that endless life; the best and most noble way, and truth and life, of all others? truly, other way there can be none but the most holy and precious merit of Christ; nor other truth, but the word of God; nor other life, but immortality of happiness in heaven.

§ 10. Now then, if you desire, O christian, to be exalted to heaven, and immortalized in this glorious life, it behoves you here to believe in Christ, and after his example, to follow humility in this world, which alone is the king's way. If you would not be deceived by the world, take hold of his word by faith, and follow the footsteps of his holy life; because this is the chief and the infallible truth. If you desire to live with Christ, then with him and through him you must die to sin, and become a new creature; because this is life. In brief, Christ is the *way*, the *truth*, and the *life*; and the life no less by example, than by merit. "Be ye then followers of God, as dear children," says St. Paul. And let us, therefore, with all our might and power, endeavour this one thing, that our life may, as near as possible, be most like to Christ's life. So that if other things be wanting to confound the false christians, even this example of Christ may alone be sufficient.

§ 11. For we may surely be ashamed thus to lead our lives in pleasures, when Christ Jesus led his in sorrows; and to acquaint ourselves with earthly joy, when

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he was acquainted with grief, even to his death. And well may we be confounded to seek the applause, and court the favour of this world, when we behold how he was rejected and despised of men; and to hide, as it were, our faces from him, as if we even counted it a shame to have such a captain of our salvation; or to follow Him, who, treading upon the world, endured the cross. Now a soldier forgets his own private satisfaction and ease, when he sees his captain, by fighting valiantly, receive his death; but you are for obtaining the pleasures, and for acquiring the honours of the world, even before your captain's eyes, when he was used by it most contemptuously, and nailed for you to the accursed tree; shall I not say, that you verily do not fight under his banner? For is not his banner the cross? But, alas! we will notwithstanding be accounted christians. All of us would be saved by the death of Christ: yet how few there are who imitate the life of Christ? No, surely, if it were the part of a christian to be a seeker after worldly wealth, perishing fame, and temporal honours, Christ our captain would never have commanded to bear the loss of them, for the sake of the eternal and sovereign good. Behold with me, now his life and doctrine, and you will own that there is nothing more unlike than the world and he: Nothing more opposite, than the wisdom of the world and his wisdom. Behold that manger, that stable, those swaddling-clothes! well! are not they a spectacle to you of the contempt of these worldly things? And can any one then say, that these examples will be apt to draw you off from the true and right way, by not attending to his doctrine? Nay, rather, I say, it is a means to bring you into the right way, when you compare his doctrine and way, with his example. Hereupon he well says, and proclaims, that he is both the way and the truth.

§ 12. So then, if they that are christians indeed, by contempt, by tribulation, by reproaches, walking by the truth of his doctrine, in the path of his examples, attempt to make the best of their way to heaven; hence, verily, it follows, that you that seek here after honour

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and wealth, and thirst after worldly promotion, thereby are in the very ready way to hell. Wherefore return, and come out of that broad high-way which leads unto death, wherein you are so pleased at present : and come now into this safe way wherein the traveller cannot stray, and embrace the truth that cannot deceive, and live in him who is life itself. This way is truth, this truth is the way.

§ 13. Oh ! the horrible blindness ! A worm of the earth will make himself great, when the Lord of glory in the world did willingly give up his own life ! Blush therefore, blush, O faithful soul ! and do not, when your heavenly bridegroom, the celestial Isaac, comes as it were on foot to meet you, sit aloft on your camel ; but like Rebecca, who beholding her husband, for bashfulness covered her face, and coming down from her camel, went on foot with him ; so do you, from the toilsome beast of your proud heart, descend lowly upon the ground, and meet your spouse, and he will infold you in his arms, and bring you into his heart. Go from your own land, and from your acquaintance, and from your father's house, and come into the land which he will shew you, who is your beloved, and your Lord God ; so said God to Abraham. Go in like manner as becomes a true child of Abraham, out of the house of your self-love and self-will.

§ 14. For self-love corrupts true judgment, blinds the understanding, disturbs the reason, seduces the will, corrupts the conscience, shuts the gates of life, and knows not God, or even one's neighbour made after the image of God ; it expels virtue, hunts after honours, lies in wait for riches, lusts after pleasures ; and lastly, in a word, prefers earth to heaven. Now whosoever so loves this life, shall lose it. But whosoever hates his own life ; that is, denies his self-love, this man shall surely keep it to eternal life. Moreover, self-love is the root of impenitence, and the wheel of damnation ; with which, as many as are bewitched, are without humility ; and consequently, are also without the acknowledgment, or confession of their sins, the remission whereof can hence be obtained by them, with no tears : foras-

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much as they are tears,* not for having offended God, but merely for their own loss and suffering.

§ 15. The kingdom of heaven is in the gospel compared to a precious stone, or a pearl of great value ; which, to obtain, the jeweller went and sold all that he had. This pearl is God himself, or eternal life ; to obtain which all other things are of necessity to be left. Of this we have a most positive and clear example in Jesus Christ, who descended from heaven, not for his own, but for your sake ; not to serve or profit himself, but to serve and profit you ; and will you then doubt to seek him alone, who did thus as it were forget himself for you, and who for you, even gave himself unto death? It is the part, no doubt of a faithful spouse, to seek to please none but her husband ; and desire you, being espoused to Christ, still to please the world? Ah ! let not the world rob you of your honour ! You are always to remember, that your soul is espoused to Christ, and that not without a sacrifice ; and with this express condition also annexed, that you must not love any but Christ, that he may delight in you, and rejoice over you as over his bride. For which end, firmly persuade yourself, that for the sake of him, you ought not only to love, but even to contemn, and put all things besides quite out of your mind ; that your bridegroom may account you worthy of his loving embraces.

§ 16. For if you presume to divide your love, so that you behold not Christ alone in all things, you are then no virgin, but an adulteress; for it behoves the love of a christian to be a chaste virgin, and without spot. Thence, as in the law of Moses it was lawful for the high-priest to marry with a virgin only, so Christ our true High-Priest, desires a virgin soul, or one which is taken with nothing besides his love ; and so knows not, and loves not, her own self in respect of Christ. And this is what he himself professes in express words, saying, "If any man come unto me, and hateth not his own soul, he cannot be my disciple."

§ 17. What it is to do thus, let us shew in a word. We all carry about with us the old man, and are conse-

* Non fuerunt Lacrymæ offensi Dei, sed proprii damni.

quently the old man himself; whose nature and property it is to do nothing but sin, to love himself, to follow his private profits and honours, and to pamper his own will and the flesh. For the flesh is at all times like unto itself; it studies itself, it gives honour to itself; it applauds itself; it serves itself; it respects itself in all things; it is easily grieved, is envious, bitter, covetous of revenge: all which you do and are; for seeing these properties arise and flow from your heart, this is your very life, even the life of the old man in you. Wherefore you must necessarily hate yourself under this consideration, and your own natural or animal life, if you desire to be Christ's disciple. For he that loves himself, hereby loves his own pride and his own covetousness; yea, loves his own wrath, hatred, envy, lying, perfidiousness, unrighteousness, and all his own wicked lusts. These you must not love, excuse, or cover; but you must hate them, forsake them, and totally mortify them, if you have a mind to be a christian indeed. And thus by hating your life in this world, you shall certainly preserve it for the world to come unto life eternal.

CHAP. XV.

WHAT THE TRUE CROSS OF CHRIST IS.

Shewing what it is for a Man to deny himself; and how the old Man should die daily, and the new Man be daily renewed.

LUKE ix. 23.—*If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.*

§ 1. OF the old and new man, thus speaks St. Paul, and that as the truth which is in Jesus; viz. "That ye put off, according to your former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which is created," fashioned and imaged according to God, in exact justice and

holiness of truth, as has been before observed. And he expresses the reason also why this should so be, in words to this effect: "For ye are bought with a great price; therefore glorify, and bear about with you, God in your hearts. And also, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost? therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." What the old man is, we said even now; namely, pride, covousness, lasciviousness, unrighteousness, wrath, enmity, hatred, and the like: all which must die in a true christian, to the end that the new man may spring up in him, and be day by day renewed. The old man therefore dying, the new man is quickened in proportion to it: that is, as pride wastes, so humility succeeds by the grace of the Holy Ghost; as wrath is quenched in the soul, so meekness shines in the room of it; thus also covetousness being extinguished, trust in God is increased; and the love of the world being taken away, the love of God comes in its place, and waxes warm and vigorous.

§ 2. This then is the new man with his members; these are the fruits of the Spirit; this is the living and powerful faith; this is Christ in us, and his most noble life; this is new obedience; this is the new commandment; this is the fruit of the new birth in us; in which birth you must live, if you will be a child of God, or are desirous at least so to be. For they, and none but they, that live in the new birth, are to be called the children of God, and are to be numbered among the sons of the Holiest. And therefore, for the sake of this, surely a man ought to deny himself, to part with what touches most his honour, to lay down his own will, his own judgment, and his own estimation; with all his love and his pleasure, all his profit and interest in this world; to forego freely his own right; and not only to think himself unworthy of all other things, but, what is more than all this, even so much as to live his own life. Whence a true christian, being one that is endued with the humility of Jesus Christ, willingly and readily acknowledges that a man cannot by his own right, challenge any of those things which God bestows on him, or lay claim to the very least of all his benefits; seeing that all

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the things that are, are merely the free gifts of divine munificence to man; whereupon he uses also the same as the goods of another, and with fear and trembling; not to his own private pleasure or satisfaction, or as instruments of his private profit, praise, and estimation in the world.

§ 3. Then, let us now compare together a true christian who denies himself, and a false christian, who is possessed with this disorderly love of self. If you offer this latter what he takes to be an affront, presently you shall see him wax hot, break out into anger, and shew much discontent: and if you happen to reprove him a little, then he will play the madman, both in words and deeds, that he may be revenged; and will frequently bind his allegation with an oath. All which is of the old man; to whom it is proper to be angry, and to practise hatred and revenge. On the contrary, he that is a christian indeed, and has denied himself, is gentle, courteous, well-pleased, patient, easily to be entreated, thinking nothing of revenge, full of compassion and tenderness; confessing himself to be unworthy of all that he has, and worthy of all the evil which he hears of himself, and of much more; because all these are contained under the name of self-denial.

§ 4. In which high patience, meekness, and lowliness, our Lord Christ is gone before us; who, that he might set us an example, chose to deny himself; whereof he speaks, saying, "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister unto others." And again, "I am in the midst of you as one that ministereth." And in another place, "The Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." And also again, "I am a worm and no man." And in like manner did blessed David, when Shimei reviled him, deny also himself, saying to this purpose, "The Lord hath commanded him; for I am a worm in the sight of the Lord; I am worthy even of far worse things. It is the Lord; yea, the Lord hath said unto him, curse David: Who then shall say, wherefore hast thou done so?" Briefly, all the saints of God, and the holy prophets, have denied themselves, holding themselves altogether unworthy of every good

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thing. So hereupon they did bear all things patiently and contentedly; they cursed no man; they gave thanks for their injuries, and returned good for evil; they blessed their persecutors, and prayed for them that slew them: and so by many tribulations have they entered the kingdom of heaven. And you also in like manner must enter, if at all. You have it now declared to you what it is to deny yourself; even to acknowledge yourself unworthy of every good thing, and worthy of all the evils that may or can befall you. And this is the cross of Christ which he has commanded and encouraged us to carry, saying to us, "he that will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up my cross."

§ 5. For this self-denying life of Christ is a cross to the old man; and to flesh and blood it is a sharp punishment; yea, death itself: Because the natural man had much rather lead an unbridled life, after his own will, in all kind of worldly pleasure, than in humility, lowliness, patience; or than to assume the life of Christ, which would be its death. Which nevertheless is to be done out of necessity: Since whatsoever is of the old man ought to die in a christian. For you will never put on the humility of Christ, unless you put off the pride of the old man: nor put on the poverty of Christ, unless you cut off avarice by the heart-strings; nor the contempt of glory, and reproach of his cross, unless you pull up ambition by the root; nor the meekness and patience of Christ, unless you correct your desire of revenge, and mortify your wrath. All which the scripture calls by the term of self-denial, the bearing of Christ's cross, and the following of Christ; and this for no hope of profit, merit, meed, reward, interest, praise, or glory, but only for the love of Christ; and because Christ has done this first, because this is Christ's life, and because Christ has left us this command.

§ 6. Furthermore, as we are to conceive and believe that the image of God is the greatest dignity and honour of man; so seeing this is the image of God in Christ, and in us; a greater honour than which, none can ever happen to man: It were surely a thing very unworthy in us, to expect other reward of our work and daily la-

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bour. Since even those that consider all things by the honour of this world, attend commonly to that only, by which alone they are made in their opinion better than others; when (what they call) fortune has bestowed all such things upon them as the world can draw them with. What a madness then would it be in any one, that seeks after the image and glory of God, that it may be inwardly renewed in his soul, to attend to any thing besides it? or to desire that the things also of the world may together with it be bestowed of God upon him; or indeed, any thing besides this very image, by which God himself with all his fulness is reflected in the soul? But the manifestation of this divine image and glory in the human soul is generally obstructed by want of this due and fixed attention, which teaches us to watch over and deny ourselves, in all things which may prevent or hinder the same. Now what is it in man, that strives so continually after the honour and image of the world, whereby he is not one jot the better before God, whatever he may be before men, and perhaps is even a great deal worse than others? Verily, it is nothing else but the poisonous and accursed root of inordinate self-love. And this alone is that which makes a difference where God has made none, and is for drawing all things most absurdly to itself. It is this accursed root, I say, which makes all the difference, where God and nature have not made it. Of this witnesses the hour of our birth, and also the hour of our death. For the greatest in the world have one and the same body of flesh and blood, in like manner as the very least and meanest of men. So that no man is one hair's breadth better than another. The one is born even as the other, and the one dies even as the other: For all men have one entrance into life, and the like going out of it. The beginning and end of all men then as to this world is one; and there is no king that had any other beginning and birth, or end of life, than the beggar upon the dunghill! neither is one better than another; nor one enters this life or goes forth with better conditions than the other. Wherefore, what a madness is this of ours? We fools vex ourselves willingly; and to other crosses we superadd this of our own. All which is ef-

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fectually self-love ; which is absolutely forbidden us, if we would follow Christ. Him therefore, if we would imitate, let us deny ourselves, and let us not add the wheel (the restless wheel) of ambition, to the vice of self-love : from whence that mad and giddy hunting after this world's honour springs ; which, whosoever loves, applauds, and flatters himself in, serving the pomps, the honours, and the praises thereof: it is certain that he averts his mind from God to the world, and from Christ to himself. And to such an one appertains that of our blessed Saviour : "If thou wilt keep thyself, thy soul, and thy life, with all that is most precious and dear, thou must hate all these ; but if thou be resolved to love them thou art truly in the way of perdition." "For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it : But whosoever will lose his life for my name's sake, shall save it." Which paradoxical sentence, the old Adam, to whom it is always pleasing to be accounted some body, does, out of his own inward image and life, refuse ; and is an adversary to. And thereupon it is that there be very few who know this life or genius of the old Adam ; or who, this being known, dare engage and encounter with it. And especially when we must needs extirpate both it and all other things that therewith have their beginning with us, as also their continuance with us ; but that must die with Christ. Such are pride, covetousness, ambition, voluptuousness, and wrathfulness ; all which we must slay and bury in the humility of Jesus Christ ; in the poverty, contumely, suffering, and gentleness of Jesus Christ.

§ 7. But whosoever is dead after this manner to himself, the same will easily thenceforth contemn the world, with all the pomps thereof, and will trample upon wealth, honour, and pleasures ; as comprising all these, and all that can be ever wished for in one Christ. He is a true stranger to this world, but a continual guest and table-friend of Christ, who after a little while will fill his heart with joy exceeding ; and even in this life will keep a daily jubilee with him, and in the other, an eternal jubilee with him together with all the saints.

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CHAP. XVI.

The continual Combat of the Flesh and Spirit.

ROM. vii. 23.—*I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind.*

§ 1. IN every true christian there is a twofold man, exterior and interior. These two are not one in another; but one against another; forasmuch as the life of one is the death of the other. For as the outward man lives, so dies, in proportion, the inward man; and as the inward man lives, so the outward man also dies, according to that of St. Paul, "If our outward man be corrupted, yet the inward is day by day renewed." The same apostle speaking of these two, calls one, *the law of the mind*, and the other, *the law of the members*. And in another place he names them, *the flesh*, and *the spirit*. "The flesh (says he,) coveteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh." Therefore, whenever the spirit overcomes in a man, then man lives in a new nature; he lives according to a new nativity, and a new creature; he lives in God and Christ; he lives after the spirit, and thence is called spiritual. But when the flesh is reigning and domineering in him, then the same man lives in the devil and in the old nativity, is under the dominion of the world, is a slave to the flesh, is without the kingdom of God, and is called carnal.

§ 2. And furthermore, to be wise according to the flesh, and to be carnally minded, is death; but to be wise according to the spirit, or to be spiritually minded, is life, even life eternal. Therefore according to the rule and predominance of either of these, so man obtains his name in holy scripture: even according as either the carnal or the spiritual man lives and moves, speaks, and works in him. Hence, if fleshly concupiscence, with its strength, be overcome, this will be an invincible argument of the strength which the spirit has in the inward man: but if this faint in the combat, then it

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is a true sign of the weakness both of the faith and of the spirit. Because you are to know that these two, faith and spirit, are one thing, according to that of the apostle. "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken: we also believe, and therefore speak." For which cause *we faint not*, while we look not at the things which are visible and temporal, but at the things which are invisible and eternal: *but though our outward man perish, yet*, through the abundant grace of God redounding in us to his glory, *the inward man is renewed* (in the spirit) *day by day*.

§ 3. Moreover, when any one has tamed once himself, and mortified his own affections and passions, and has learnt to keep them all in their respective duties: there is no doubt but such an one is stronger than he that overcomes a most strong tower, or that takes a fortified town, according to the holy proverb: "the patient man is better than a strong man, and he that ruleth over his own mind, than he that gaineth a city." If therefore you have a desire to be a mighty conqueror, and to set your heart upon the greatest victory, and would obtain the most glorious laurels and immortal palms, then conquer you yourself, subdue your passions, quell your lusts, overcome your pride, throw down the walls of your Babel, trample upon your ambition, tread your carnal wisdom under foot, and be sure to give no quarter to covetousness and evil thoughts: and so you will overturn in you the kingdom of the devil, who rules in the world by such means. Of which sort of victors there be, alas! who truly may be called conquerors of the world, very few to be found; whereas there be many conquerors of cities.

§ 4. If you cleave to the body over-much, you will slay your soul. Now it is better that the soul should overcome, that so the body therewith may be preserved, than that the body overcoming, both the body and the soul should thereby perish together. For our Saviour Christ has plainly said, "*He that loveth his own life* (meaning thereby the bodily life) *loseth it; and he that hateth his own life* (the same bodily life) *in this world*,

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keepeth it to eternal life." But howsoever this strife of the spirit against the flesh, may have in it sharp things to be borne with, yet it brings forth in the end, a most famous victory, and most beautiful crown: wherefore, "be thou faithful unto death," says the Son of God, the mighty conqueror, "and I will give thee a crown of life." And the disciple that lay in his bosom, saith, "This is the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith." But what is it, you will say, to *overcome* the world? Know then, it is to subdue and drive out the spirit of the world from you, and to have no fellowship with the works and manners thereof, but to resist the same. And what are we properly here to understand by the world? It is the world within us, and the spirit thereof in the inward ground of our hearts. Which spirit being overcome, we become stronger than the world: and so overcoming the world, we are also stronger than ourselves, even than ourselves in our full strength and best estate; through him that is able to subdue all things unto us, by his mighty grace which works in us according to his will, that he may be glorified both in our bodies and in our souls. Here then consult with the spirit and advise: For the victory of the soul keeps the whole man; and the body being conquered, shall not fail hereafter to partake in the triumphs of its conqueror.

§ 5. But if some should here say; "What, shall I then be damned, if sin sometimes subjects me, and carries me away, though unwilling to yield to it? And must I therefore be put out of the number of the sons of God, and be accounted as one of the progeny of the devil, according to that received maxim, viz. "He that sinneth is of the devil?" God forbid. For if you find in you a conflict of the spirit, and a strife with the flesh, and feel frequently a great uneasiness, that you do things that you would not; this is in you a manifestation of a faithful heart, and a sign that the faith (or the spirit) which is in you, is averse to the flesh. For St. Paul, by his own example, teaches that this strife may be found sometimes even in very good and faithful souls, when he professes plainly, that he perceived another law in his mem-

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bers resisting the law of his mind, (that is, the new creature, or the new and inward man,) and taking him captive in the law of sin, by causing him sometimes to do the things he would not: for to will was always indeed (as he tells us) present with him; but to finish and perfect that which is good, and which he willed, he was not able; for as much as he could not do of himself the good that he would, but to do the evil he would not, that was always present and easy to him. Therefore during this combat, most lamentably he exclaims, "unhappy man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Like unto which is that also which Christ himself pronounces, viz. "the spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak."

§ 6. Sin therefore does not rule in man, so long as this strife is perceived in him; neither is it to be said, that sin exercises its dominion over him who daily fights against it, and so suffers it not peaceably to rule, by the spirit rising up, and continually resisting it. This consequently cannot damn a man: for though by constant experience, he is made sensible that his flesh is weak, yea, exceeding weak; yet feels he nevertheless, that the spirit in him is ready and willing to obey perfectly the divine law.

§ 7. It is the condition of all the saints, alike to have sins and infirmities, according to that of this great saint, saying, "I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." Also according to that of blessed John, "If we say, we have no sin, we deceive ourselves." This now is what vulgarly we call sin dwelling in us; thereby to distinguish it from sin reigning in us, whose property alone it is to condemn; since no man is ever condemned of God because of the former. For that sin we contend with, and do not consent to, is not imputed unto us. And hence with St. Paul, speaking to the Romans, we can well cry out and say, "Now then there is no condemnation to those which are in Christ Jesus, who live not after the flesh;" that is, who do not suffer the fleshly lust and wisdom to bear rule in them. But as many as are not exercised in this daily strife, nor acquainted with this combat of flesh and spirit, these are

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not born again, they having sins still reigning in them: and therefore they are overcome, and are the servants of sin and Satan; and consequently damned: for the law of the spirit of life has not made them free from the law of sin and death, so long as they suffer sin thus to rule over them, and to reign in their members.

§ 8. This strife is shadowed out unto us in the type of the Canaanites, whose remainder was suffered to dwell among the children of Israel, but not to rule over them: even so the holy men of God do every one of them feel and suffer in themselves some imperfections remaining; but in the mean time they suffer them not to rule over them: For thus indeed it becomes the new man in Christ, who is a true Israelite and a champion of God, and who (as a prince) has power with God, and therefore shall prevail: whereas the old man shall be subdued and brought under him. Hence the daily strife against the old man is a living demonstration of the new; for it argues plainly, that there are two contending powers. Spiritual strength and victory shew a true Israelite: and the warfare of the spirit approves him to be a christian indeed. For the land of Canaan, according to the type, is conquered and occupied in war. But if it happen sometimes that the flesh, or the Canaanite, invades the territories, it is then the part of the true Israel, not to suffer the tyrant long; but, having gathered his new strength, and called together a fresh aid, by the grace of God in Christ, to endeavour, by serious repentance and remission of sins, to arise from his fall. For which end he must, by faith, implore and entreat earnestly the true Joshua, or Jesus, to gain him the victory; even that true prince of his people, to lead him forth, and to overcome for him these spiritual Canaanites. Which being done, his sin is blotted out of mind, is cancelled, is obliterated forever, and he pardoned fully; and then the man is again renewed to life, and is transplanted into Christ.

§ 9. Wherefore they who feel many imperfections yet in their flesh, and cannot perform all things according to their mind, let me persuade them as true converts, and hearty penitents, to cleave to the merits of Jesus

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Christ effectually, entreating him earnestly to hide their spots under the mantle of his most perfect obedience, and then after that to cleanse them thoroughly from all unrighteousness, by the sanctification of the spirit. This is the means that God has willed; and this is the way and lawful appointment of the salutary imputation of the merits of Jesus Christ; for the imputation of his precious merits is only belonging to the penitent: and then only, when daily repentance goes before, and follows after, accompanied with faith and obedience, it is made available to him. Which the impenitent not performing, but pleasing the flesh in every thing, and sitting at rest under sin that reigns in them; nothing in the world can surely be more absurd than for such as these to challenge the merit of Christ, as belonging to them. For how can the blood of Christ profit them, which is even by themselves *trodden under foot?* And if the spirit of Christ dwells not in them, are they not dead because of sin? Since through his spirit they must by faith mortify the deeds of the flesh, if they would live, and be children and heirs of God.

CHAP. XVII.

A Christian's Inheritance not of this World.

1 TIM. vi. 7, 8.—*We brought nothing into this world, neither shall we carry any thing out of it; having therefore food and raiment, let us be therewith content.*

§ 1. SEEING God Almighty created temporal good things, to that end, and did bestow them on man as certain helps and necessary furtherance in his pilgrimage, it is meet they should not be otherwise converted, but be used and taken from our most loving God with thanksgiving, mingled with fear and trembling. And whatsoever things are more than necessary, these are all left to man as a trial by God, to prove him: that by this it may be seen how his mind stands between

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these terrestrials and God himself; that is, whether he adhere to God alone, rest in God alone, and seek only after the celestial and invisible goods: or on the contrary, whether he suck in and feed on the enticements of sublunary things, addict himself to this temporal life, and prefer this earthly paradise before the heavenly. Thence God, our Father Almighty, the most free Being of all beings, by reason of things temporal, (and with respect to them properly) gave to man, his offspring and image, a free election and choice; that so in him, by riches, by honours, by the talents and graces of nature, and by other goodly gifts, it might be manifested in some sort, whether he did truly cleave unto God, eye him, move in him, live in him; or whether, being seduced with the splendour and false shews of the creature, he turned his mind from God, cleaved to the creature, respected God's shadow in it more than God himself, and lived without God, and even contrary to God.

§ 2. After which manner every one verily is, by his own sentence and trial, declared guilty: and, convicted by himself, remains inexcusable; according to that of the law-giver, who having delivered the law, made the people such an address as this, by way of appeal, to every one in particular: "Consider what I have propounded this day before you: I have set before you life and good; and death and evil; that you might choose life, and might bless yourself, by cleaving to the Lord thy God alone, and walking in his ways, because he is thy life and the length of thy days, and to obey his voice is blessing for evermore. Wherefore let not thine heart turn away from thy God, neither suffer thy will to be drawn away to the creature, to love and serve that; but adhere to him only: and let thy delight be in his law, to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply, and thou mayest dwell and prosper in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers to give them." And certainly nothing can be more solemn, or a more full and authentic declaration of this liberty of election, than what he said in the presence of them all, viz. "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you

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life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live," Deut. xxx. 19. To love God is life; to love the creature is death: there is none good but God; and there is no evil, but in a separation from the One only Good. All things therefore in this world are exposed to our senses, not to drag us down to them, but to lift us up to God: not for the cause of deliciousness and pleasure, but as proofs and trials of our fidelity; in which trials, the fall is easy when we once begin to fall from God.

§ 3. And this is that forbidden tree, with the fruits thereof; the eating of which is so strictly prohibited, lest our mind, resting in them, might take delight, and so play the adulteress, after the manner of this evil and adulterous generation, who knows no other pleasure but what is taken in and received from earthly objects; abusing thus thereby the creatures of God, as meat, drink, and apparel, to the pleasures of the flesh, and to vain sordid delights, wherewith most people at this day are drawn aside from God.

§ 4. But it is the part certainly, of all true christians, to think, that they be in this world strangers, or as pilgrims, whose necessities these earthly things should serve, not for delicateness, but for necessity: and that they should not set therefore their delight in the world, but should place it in God alone: since if they do otherwise, they do but entangle themselves in sin; and so, being seduced with wicked concupiscence, while they become wanton and effeminate, and are no true Israelites, they with Eve eat of the forbidden fruit. Hence they that are christians indeed, do not desire curiously and deliciously to feast themselves with dainties, but hunger after the food which corrupts not: they follow not the pomp and finery of apparel that is earthly, but aspire after the clothing of divine light, and of glorified bodies. In a word, to a true christian, all things in this world that may please others, are nothing but a cross and temptation, but gall and venom, but allurements of sin, and baits of death. And rightly indeed are they so termed: For whatsoever a man, that he may

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obey his lusts, and pamper the flesh, usurps without the fear of God, cannot but be venom and poison to the soul; howsoever to the body it may seem healthful and pleasant.

§ 5. But such is the dulness of fallen man, that no man lays it to heart to know the forbidden tree; but every man and woman most intemperately is fed with the lusts of the flesh, which is the fruit of the forbidden tree. A christian on the contrary, who uses all things with the fear of God; and as a stranger, watching himself with diligence, and having a great care that he offend not his heavenly Father either in meat, or in drink, or in clothing, or in houses, or in any other good thing of this life, either by his own intemperate use, or by that of his table-friends and companions, will be sure to take heed of all abuses of this kind most diligently, will not feed upon the forbidden fruit, yea, will not so much as gaze on the tempting tree; for with the eyes of faith he beholds steadfastly the future good things, and for the sake thereof, regards not this elementary and mortal body; for what profits it the body, which by and by is to be eaten with worms, if in this world it swell in all kind of pleasure? "Naked (saith holy Job) came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return again." A naked, infirm, and perishable body, we all bring with us into the world; yea, as an unprofitable burden we bring it with us, and carry it through the world; which, as the spoil of death, is taken from us again, when we go out of the world; for we carry it not out again, but it is carried out by others, when we are departed, having been stripped first naked of all that is in the world. For naked we came, and naked shall we return thither. And all know that the rich and poor here are one. As we brought nothing, so we carry away nothing of the world with us: Lo, all is gone as a deceitful shadow. We shall find nothing in our hands of all that we have grasped; we shall awake every man empty out of his dream; the prince and the beggar go forth alike, when they have acted here a little while their parts: We go forth hence, in a word, even as we entered, and in truth, poorer than we entered.

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§ 6. For being born, we had both a body and life; and things not yet being ripe, there were nevertheless at hand for us, clothing, with meat and drink; all which, being dead, we leave behind us. And so now, whatsoever we had even from our very birth to the hour of death, and which was in this world the poor solace of a miserable necessity, is all taken from us as in one moment; yea, even the bread of mercy and of grief too, is taken away, the use and possession whereof death has interdicted. So therefore nothing is more wretched, and poor, and naked, than a dead person, if he be not clothed with Christ, and rich in God.

§ 7. Go to then, O ye mortals, because we are strangers and pilgrims in this world, and because we must leave all these things when we die, willing or unwilling; let us cease, at least, to be grievous to our souls in such things, and let us frankly acknowledge it to be one kind of madness (and not the least) to gather wealth with great labour, for a frail body, which body we cannot carry out of the world; and that especially seeing there is another world, and another body, and another life. Call these things, I say, O ye mortals, to mind: To you I speak, who in truth are strangers and pilgrims before the eyes of God, as in the Psalms and elsewhere, it is witnessed for your instruction. But alas! very few of you testify that you think so by your deeds; for if we be strangers in this world, then it follows, that our country is elsewhere. This is manifest to man of itself; and if we but compare time with eternity, the visible world with the invisible, the earthly habitation with the heavenly, the mortal with immortal things, and those which are frail, with those which are eternal, this will still more evidently appear. In which comparison or meditation of contrary objects and things, our soul is greatly enlightened.

§ 8. And thus by faith, we behold many things, to the knowledge whereof, they are not admitted, who to this contemplation are not at leisure, or are for it unfit: And therefore like a sow in the mire, so wallow they in earthly filth, being drowned in covetousness, being nailed down to the world, being sunk into a state of brutish-

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ness; being overwhelmed with cares, and solicitous study of earthly shadows; being given up to selfishness, and griping dust: but as concerning the soul, altogether blind; however, otherwise they may have a quick sight, and even the eyes of a vulture, or a lynx, as to the world. The reason of which is, because such as these have so addicted themselves to this frail and worldly life, as to think this alone the most pleasant, the best, and most noble. Whereas true christians, esteeming all things with a sound judgment, and a right estimation, account it rather an exile, a valley of tears, a den of misery, a prison of grief, and a dungeon of sorrow. Hence it comes, that those who love the world, do not exceed brute beasts in understanding, or true prudence; and a man of the world is said to "die like a beast," as says the Psalmist; for as much as they think not on heavenly and eternal things, neither do they rejoice in God, but in the world, and are pleased only in earthly things. In these things they take sweet delight and rest; and having obtained these, think they are exceeding well. Wretched men, indeed; blind, and stupid blocks, mere animals, sitting here in the darkness of ignorance, and hence removing to that of death and damnation.

§ 9. But that we may not abide without understanding, and without honour, like to the beasts that perish, we must firmly imprint this in our minds, that we are strangers and pilgrims in this world, after the example of Christ, whose doctrine and life we ought equally to love, and apply ourselves always to him as to an image and pattern for all true christians to follow; and to conform our manners, our thoughts, our designs, and the whole course of our lives and conversation to him. Wherefore above all things, and in all things, it behoves us to look to him, who, when he was the most noble of all men, chose voluntarily that life in which nothing noble might appear according to the world; nothing notable as for himself, besides extreme poverty, and a contempt of honour, wealth, and pleasure;* which three are held by the world, for three gods, and set up in the room of the true God blessed forever. These he contemned, to

* Quæ Tria pro Trino numine Mundus habet.

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whom all the world did sacrifice; and therefore he confesses, "That the Son of Man had not whereon to rest his head."

§ 10. So David in like manner, before he was called to the kingdom, was poor, vile, and contemned; and being made King, he yet esteemed all kingly splendour as nothing, in comparison of life eternal, and the kingdom of God in the heavens. Whereupon the psalmist sings, "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O God of power? My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh were exalted in the living God: better is one day in thy house, than a thousand elsewhere." I have indeed a kingdom, I have subjects and people subdued unto me, I have kingly palaces, and the tower of Sion; but these are nothing in respect of thy tabernacle, O Lord. And I had rather be a door-keeper in thy house, than to dwell a prince in these. Neither was blessed Job of another mind, when he rejoiced in his Redeemer; nor Peter, nor Paul, nor any of the other apostles, who intended not the riches of this world, but sought after the riches of another and better world; and therefore took upon them the poor life of Christ, walking in his charity, lowliness, and patience, whereby they contemned this earth, and triumphed over the world. They prayed hence for them that cursed them; they thanked them that reproached them; they blessed them that reviled them; in persecutions they praised God; by many tribulations they professed that they were called to enter into the kingdom of heaven: and when they were slain, they (with Christ their head) prayed, "Father, forgive them, and lay not this sin to their charge." So dead were they to all wrath, revenge, bitterness, ambition, pride, love of the world, and love of self, and so did they live in Christ, and in his love, his meekness, his humility, and his patience. And thus were they perfectly made alive in Christ by faith; and by this faith they lived; which most noble way of living, to the lover of this world, is altogether unknown: and this is because he lives not in Christ: and being ignorant that true life is in Christ, it comes thence to pass that he is dead in

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his trespasses and sins. Hence wrath, hatred, envy, covetousness, pride, and lust of revenge, are found to live in him. And as many as live not in the spirit of Christ, they are none of his; and are accounted by him as dead. Neither live they in Christ by faith, who follow not his steps: whatever they may persuade others, and boast of themselves.

§ 11. True christians, on the contrary, understand that it is their duty to follow the steps of Christ, to conform their lives to the life of Christ, and to take from him, as from an original, or a most authentic author, the rule both of life and doctrine. They have his life, in a word, for their exemplar; and their book is Christ himself. From whom they derive all their learning, according to that true saying, *Omnia nos Christi Vita docere potest.* That is, *The life of Christ can well teach us all things.* Now these being found to be such, and knowing that none but this is the only true life which is in Christ Jesus, and the only true wisdom that is in him, utterly despise the life and wisdom of the world. And these, and none but these, are to be called his true disciples; for as much as they delight to be always reading Christ, meditating upon Christ, studying Christ, and to be continually busied in transcribing him; so as they would gladly, if they could, never so much as look off upon any other book. These say, with the apostles, "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for those things which are seen, are temporal: but those things that are not seen, are eternal." And with all the holy ancients they farther declare: "We have here no continuing city, but we seek one to come."

§ 12. But if it be true, that here we be strangers, and have not any abiding place in this world, it follows, that we were not created for the sake of this present world; and further it follows then, that there remains for us another world, another country, another city, other dwellings, other tabernacles; for which we should think it gain to lay down even an hundred worlds, yea, our very life itself. All which a true christian well knowing, and seriously reflecting on, rejoices in his spirit that

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he was ordained to eternal life, and has a continuing city prepared for him in the heavens, for which he was created after the heavenly Image. And hence attending this one thing, how he may grow rich in God, and attain the blessed end of his creation; he laughs at the madness of those that being made blind with the love of the world, fear not miserably to afflict their own souls for the sake of frail and perishable things; which can give them at best, no real satisfaction, and whence they are so unhappy as to lose their souls.

CHAP. XVIII.

The extravagant Madness of preferring temporal Things before eternal.

NUMB. xi. 1.—*The Lord heard it, and his anger was kindled; and the fire of the Lord burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp.*

§ 1. The children of Israel murmured against Moses, and said, "Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember, (said they,) the fishes, the cucumbers, and the melons," which we did eat in Egypt freely. Which is a type of the men of this time, who under the pretext and title of the gospel, seek generally after nothing but earthly and carnal things, use more diligence to be rich and great, than to become blessed and happy; study to please men more than to please God, and attribute more to the lusts of the flesh, than to the poverty of the spirit. Whereas the character of a true christian, is to have more care of eternal than of temporal honour; to seek more the glory that endures, than this which is but momentary; to thirst after the heavenly, and let, for their sake, the earthly riches go; to neglect present things, in pursuing those to come, which are more solid and real, though to us here invisible; and lastly, to crucify and mortify the flesh, that the spirit may live. This it is to be a true christian.

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§ 2. And in a word, it is the sum of all christianity, to follow Christ our Lord. For *summa Religionis est imitari eum quem colis,* saith St. Augustin: That is, *the whole of religion consists in this,* viz. *to imitate him whom thou dost worship:* Or that you yourself be a follower and a copier of the God whom you honour and serve. This, out of the light of nature, was well understood by Plato, in whose school this was a maxim, "The perfection of man consisteth in the imitation of God." Hence nothing else is left to us, but that Christ ought to be the example and pattern of our life; and that all our counsels, studies, and purposes, and indeed, all our cogitations, should only respect that one thing; how we should come to him, that so by him we may be saved, and live with him eternally; expecting in the mean time with joy, the dissolution of this our earthly prison. And to that blessed state, we shall certainly attain, if we thither direct all our labours, actions, and endeavours; making this our business and vocation by faith, and so go earnestly on with a firm desire and hope of eternal life. Or, to speak yet more significantly, we need never fear to attain it, if we never lay aside the memory of his eternal happiness in all our actions, but look steadily to the end in them all; because through this method of habituating ourselves to the presence of God, there is begotten in man a certain holy desire and thirst of eternal things; and withal, the desire and coveting of earthly things, which is insatiable in its own nature, at the same time is restrained. And this is the true subjection of the flesh. Wherefore, according to that saying of St. Paul, "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

§ 3. And the name of God is nothing else but the honour, praise, and glory of God. "According to thy name, let it be, O God, and thy praise to the ends of the world," saith David. Which scope and end, if all our works and life did chiefly respect, then we doubtless should always think of eternity, and our works would be done in God, and consequently ourselves would also be in God. Briefly, God our chief good, who is the eternal

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life, should of all our thoughts, works, and words, be the first mover, if we would not fail of eternal salvation. This is that which St. Paul most elegantly expresses to his beloved Timothy, saying, "But thou, O man of God, flee these things;" to wit, covetousness, and the love of the world.

§ 4. He calls a christian, a *man of God*, because born of God, and living in God, and therefore he is the son and heir of God. Even as contrariwise, a *man of the world* is one who lives after a worldly life, whose inheritance is the world, and whose "belly is filled with the goods of the earth," as it is in the Psalm. Which way, the christian is far from; for he has his mind fixed on the invisible eternals, seeking after divine faith and love, and shewing himself insatiably covetous of the heavenly and angelical life, for which he was created, and not for the earthly and bestial. And if it come not so to pass, but this temporal is preferred to the eternal life, then man sinks into enormous and presumptuous sins, which the most just God will punish with the eternal fire that is here prefigured out to us, by the burning of the tents, the fire sent from heaven, as from a jealous God, to punish the extravagant excesses of the Israelites.

§ 5. Wherefore as often as such like plagues as these are sent upon the wicked, inundation, fire, war, famine, pestilence, and earthquake, let us always call to mind, and duly remember, that these are the most just punishments of God, when moved to anger; and let us not be like the people of Israel, who were unmindful of heavenly, and did follow after transitory things; who did prefer the present things before future, and who had more care of the body than of the soul: Let us not be, I say, as they were: And the same things let us not err in. For if we walk in their steps, and hanker after the onions of Egypt, despising for the sake thereof, the blessed land which we are travelling to; let us not think it hard, if we also be punished even as they were punished.

§ 6. It is an extreme point of ingratitude and contempt of God, both here and hereafter to be punished, to forget God, for whom we bear about us both body and soul,

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and from whom we received them both; and instead of him to worship the idols of the creatures, the work of men's hands, and to place in our esteem eternal things after such as are transitory. For these creatures of God are given to us but for necessity; and not that we should set our hearts and minds upon them, which God alone deservedly challenges to himself. They are not given to us for themselves, but that they might be to us as prints, footsteps, and testimonies of God; whereby we can come nearer to the knowledge and love of God, the Author of them all. Which divine institution and service of the creature, when the love of the world dares arrogate and appropriate to itself; then are the slaves hereof, by the most just vengeance of God, together with proper idolaters, turned into the fire of hell; whereof Sodom and Gomorrah were a type, as likewise the burning of the Israelitish camp. I deny not, but all creatures are of themselves good; but when men once set their hearts upon them, and that not after a lawful manner, but so as to doat upon them, and worship them as idols, then they become an abomination before God, no otherwise than the most detestable and execrable images of gold and silver, and so they become the fuel and matter of eternal fire; not but that gold and silver of themselves are good creatures. In brief, the love and joy, the wealth and honour of christians, are not circumscribed but in eternity itself, whence there follows even life eternal: for where your treasure is, there is your heart and your life. But on the contrary, from the love of the world, nothing else can follow but death and damnation; forasmuch as the world passes away with all the pomp thereof; but he that does the will of God, continues forever. And hereupon St. John earnestly beseeches the faithful to withdraw their love from the world, which deceives all its adorers, saying, "Little children, do not love the world, nor those things that be in the world."

§ 7. By all which, it is most manifestly shewed, that God would not have us love any creature: First, because love is the heart of man, and the most noble of all affections; which therefore is due to God alone, as to the

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chief and only good. Secondly, because it is a great folly to love that which cannot love us again; whereupon in vain are frail and transitory things beloved; and by good-right is God alone to be loved above all creatures, who out of his exceeding love, created us to eternal life, redeemed us, and sanctified us. Thirdly, because naturally, like things are loved by like; and therefore God made you after his own image and likeness, that you might love him, and your neighbour created after the same image. Fourthly, because although our soul be like wax, ready to take any impression put upon it, or rather like a glass representing all objects set before it, whether of heaven or earth; yet is it born only to set God before it. Fifthly, as the patriarch Jacob, when he lived in Mesopotamia amongst strangers, and after twenty years' service demanded his two wives and his wages; and being provoked with the sweet memory of his country, did think and desire to return to the same: even so our soul, among worldly occupations, and all the business of our outward callings, as the load-stone, ought never to decline from the pole of eternity, and from our true country. Sixthly, because men are either good or evil by reason of that which they love; therefore he that loves God, participates of every kind of virtue and good thing: on the other side, he that loves the world, is defiled with all the sins and evils thereof. Seventhly, even as king Nebuchadnezzar, when he loved the world more than was meet, lost by it the essential form of a man, and degenerated into a very beast: So all men blotting out of their hearts the image of God, become according to the interior man, wolves, dogs, lions, and bears; for so indeed and no better are all those that addict themselves wholly to the love of this world. Last of all, what every one here favours in his heart, that will be manifested in him, and he will follow it, whether it be God or the world; which of the two he turns himself into.

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CHAP. XIX.

HE IS OF GOD MOST BELOVED, WHO IS MOST WRETCHED IN HIS OWN EYES.

Shewing how a Man, through the Knowledge in Christ, of his own Misery, is led to seek after the Grace of God.

ISA. lxvi. 2.—*To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.*

§ 1. THIS most comfortable word has our most gracious and merciful God spoken to us by the prophet Isaiah, to lift up our minds, and erect our hearts, when most oppressed with the sense of our poverty and misery: this most sweet declaration, this joyful sentence is out-spoken from himself, by his eternal word, as from his mercy seat in the heavens, to bind up the broken spirit, and pour into it the oil of heavenly consolation, and the precious balsam of saving health. For to whom, says the merciful Lord and Saviour, should I shew respect, but to the little and poor ones, and them that are of a wounded and contrite heart, fearing before me, and trembling at my words? Thus does he set forth his tender regard for as many as their own misery has taught to despise and contemn themselves, and to seek with fear and trembling a remedy suitable to what they want. Will God then look to him that is poor? to him that is wretched, and blind, and naked? Be not then ashamed to acknowledge before Him, your own littleness and poorness: be not discouraged from confessing to Him your wretchedness, and blindness, and nakedness. Will he have respect to a contrite and a bruised spirit? Will he look down upon a trembling reed, or upon broken stubble, which fears to be scattered by the breath of his word? Let your heart then melt before him; and let your spirit brake as it were into shivers, at his presence. Be sure to despise yourself as a weak reed that

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has no strength, and as the very chaff itself which is driven about by every wind: and so fear before the Majesty of the Lord, humbling your soul to the dust, and acknowledging yourself unworthy of all divine grace and favour.

§ 2. The contempt of ourselves is the first step to obtain acceptance with God: and nothing more draws the eyes of Heaven upon us, to favour us, than this self-abasement. Whosoever then is desirous to find grace and mercy, let him declare himself in his own judgment unworthy, altogether unworthy of them; and let him account himself as one that is nothing. But whosoever seems something to himself, is not yet wretched enough nor humbled enough in his own opinion; and consequently not capable of divine grace; whereupon St. Paul says, "if any man esteem himself something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself."

§ 3. For God alone is all things; and he that only knows this, but does not inwardly in his heart approve it, and shew it forth in his example, thereby argues the knowledge of God in him to be yet but very superficial and slight. Therefore if you will give God indeed the glory, and teach it by act, that God is all things, it must needs be that you use a most sharp judgment against yourself, and believe most assuredly, that you are nothing; after the example of David, who, dancing before the ark of the Lord, when Michal contemned him as an abject person, answered, "I will yet be more vile than I have been." He that will needs be something, the same is the matter out of which God makes nothing. And he that on the contrary loves to be reputed as nothing, and in his own judgment is so, this is the matter out of which the great Workman makes something. He that will be wise in his own opinion, is the matter out of which God makes a fool: and he that considers his own folly, is the subject out of which God forms a wise man. He who professes himself before God, to be more miserable and worse than all men, is, in the judgment of God, made the greatest and chief of all others: and he that in his own judgment, is the greatest of sinners, shall not be ashamed in the great congre-

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gation; for him God delights to honour as if he were the greatest of saints.

§ 4. This is in truth that humility which God exalts; this is the misery which he respects; this is the nothing of man, out of which God creates something. For no otherwise than the old world was created by God, even so is he, out of this their nothing, wont to produce the men of God, and to create them after his own likeness. Of which things we have David for example, whose littleness our most gracious God beholding, transformed him into a most noble instrument of his glory. Then next we have Jacob, whose saying this is, "I am less than all thy mercies." And above all, Christ the christian's true pattern, who was dejected below the very common sort of men, and who also for us was even accursed and made a worm: Oh! how was he an example hereof, and into how great majesty did his heavenly Father exalt him!

§ 5. For in like manner as a workman, shewing his skill upon some special piece of work, to the end he may labour it more exactly, takes a new matter that is polluted with no man's hands: even so that man, that God will make to be something, must be first nothing: And he that will make himself great, and believes himself to be something, this man cannot be the matter for divine works: because that only which is nothing and void, is that out of which he, after a wonderful manner, shapes all things; which the blessed virgin Mary knew full well, saying, "He hath regarded the lowliness of his hand-maid; therefore from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed."

§ 6. But who is this blessed lowly one that is nothing in his own eyes? He is indeed inwardly and in heart so, who thinks himself worthy of no divine benefit, either corporeal or spiritual. For he that arrogates any thing to himself, this man esteems himself something, when in truth he is nothing; and therefore is the furthest off from divine graces, and most of all unfit to be a subject for God's new creation. For he that thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, that is, nothing in God's sight, shall find nothing in the grace of God, but must of necessity lose all the benefit of it;

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because it is nothing to him, so long as he accounts himself not unworthy of it. Lo, this is that which renders grace itself of no effect, and shuts out that which contains all things in it; and to which all things are possible when received with faith and thankfulness. Since the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ abides not with any man, neither can abide with him, who holds himself to be something, or who judges himself worthy of any thing that is given him from above: because if he judge himself worthy of any thing, he takes not all things gratis of God: For it is grace not merit, whatsoever we are, or obtain for ourselves from heaven. And besides, nothing is indeed proper to man, except sin, misery, and infirmity; all other things are God's, and being God's, freely flow from God.

§ 7. Behold now the shadow of a man, which is no more something than it is a man; and consider with yourself hereupon, that man also is himself no more than a shadow, as he is considered merely in himself, that is, independently upon God by whom he subsists. As therefore the shadow follows the motion of a man, from whom it has its being: Even so should man follow the motion of God, from whom he has his. And what else is the whole creation, indeed, but as it were a shadow, being compared with the infinite Being, on which it depends, and whereby it subsists? But man, that would for any thing depend on himself, walks more especially in a vain shadow; and therefore all his thoughts are smoke, and his devisings nought but emptiness: Because in himself he has neither life, nor motion, nor being; but all that he has is in God, and of God: Thus man, as a shadowy representation, carries his life, his motion, and all that he has received, of God; according to that of St. Paul, "In him we live, move, and have our being." Also consider in like manner the shadow of a tree; and let it be, if you please, of a good tree, and bearing good fruit; and ask of the shadow, what it has to boast of? Be not deceived, for a shadow bears no fruit: And although apples appear in the shadow of the tree, they do not therefore belong to the shadow, but to the tree. Now think the like as to yourself; the

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good fruits that appear in you, are but apparent, and are not your own. But moreover, as the apple grows not out of that which is seen of the tree, (as the unskilful vulgar may be apt to think) although it hang thereon no otherwise than a child hangs on the mother's breasts, but from a certain seminal virtue impregnated from heaven, whereby the tree is made, out of the centre of the seed, to fructify, and the fruit also to grow while it hangs upon the tree.

§ 8. Thus is man by nature a dry tree, yielding no fruit: God is his strength, whereby life is renewed in him, and he is made fat and green, even like a green olive tree in the house of God, whose fatness overflows. Thus verily, all men are of themselves such fruitless trees, which have no sap of life in them, being quite dried and withered; the Lord only is their living force and vegetating power. It is the divine seminal virtue which must impregnate them, to make them flourish and bear fruit; according to Psalm xxxvii. 1. "The Lord is the strength of my life." And to that of Luke xxiii. 31. "For if they do these things to a green tree, what will they do to a dry tree?" As also to what is written both in the law and the prophets: "For I, (saith the Lord) will hear, and will direct him that he shall flourish; yea, of me shall his fruit proceed." Or, I have heard him and observed him. I am (unto thee) like a green tree, and from me is thy fruit found. And thus by Moses is God hence compared likewise to a rock, from whom are generated living stones; that is, spirits or souls subsisting in him as in their original; and their support and foundation, as well as life and power. For so it is written in the law concerning them that did not abide in and adhere to their rock, whereby they become dead and good for nought: "Of the rock that begat thee, thou art unmindful;" or, thou hast forgotten the very principle of thy life and being, and forsaken him who is the strength and stay thereof. And our blessed Saviour hence plainly tells us: "If you remain in me, you shall bear much fruit: But if not, ye shall be cast forth as withered branches; because as the branch cannot bear fruit in itself, except it abide in

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the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." See John xv. 4, 5, 6.

§ 9. But when a man is truly wretched in his own sight, and is moved at all times by, and trusts only in, the heavenly grace of Jesus Christ, beholding himself out of Christ as nothing, then God graciously respects him; which divine respect is never but after the manner of a God; it never comes to pass, after a human manner, and without a secret force and efficacy attending it; but is full always of a real virtue, life, and consolation. And as none but humble and contrite hearts are capable of this divine aspect, this heavenly favour; so by how much the more clear, more amiable, and more frequent it is, so much the less do they think themselves worthy of it.

§ 10. What a noble instance hereof have we shadowed out to us in the patriarch Jacob, who pronounces himself unworthy of all divine and temporal blessings. Therefore, according to his worthy example and heroic pattern, a heart that is truly humbled and contrite before God, acknowledges himself unworthy of the least heavenly visitation, and is exceedingly abashed to receive any divine consolation, be it never so little: whence with vehemence, he cries, "O Lord, my soul, thine hand-maid is unworthy of this thy great love and mercy which thou hast shewed me in Christ Jesus; I am less than the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servants; for behold, since thou gavest me thy Son for the staff of my life to walk with, I come with two bands, with the blessings of grace and glory."

§ 11. And indeed, if a man should weep a whole sea of tears, it were by no means a sufficient price for the least heavenly favour or consolation. Therefore, as is universally known and confessed among us, the grace of God is merely a most pure and free gift; and the merit of man nothing else but punishment both here and hereafter. This every one knows indeed, through faith, and also acknowledges freely: consequently every man is

guilty of his own misery, and is most graciously pardoned and justified of God; but this cannot be without acknowledgment, and that not of the mouth, but of the heart, that so he may obtain the favour and grace of God. Whereupon St. Paul says, "If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities;" and gives us to understand, that therefore he would boast of the infirmities which he felt in himself, that so the power of Christ might dwell in him.

§ 12. For such truly is the mercifulness of God, as he will not see his works suffer corruption: but so much the weaker the creature is in itself, so much more fortitude is there divinely infused into it; for in the weakness of the creature, the power of God is exalted the more; according to that which the Lord said unto Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my power is made perfect in infirmity." Wherefore by how much a true christian is in his own opinion, more vile and wretched, by so much does God pardon him more freely, to the greater manifestation of the riches of his glory in a vessel of mercy; not looking herein at all to any merit of his; and so much the more does he delight to visit him with the heavenly consolations, which are infinitely more sincere and noble than all human joys.

§ 13. Furthermore, it is not he that is poor and destitute of all human succour and comfort, but it is he that from the bottom of his heart. acknowledges his transgression, and is grieved for his sins; that is, the poor miserable man in his own eyes, who is made the proper subject of divine mercy. If sin were not, verily there could be no misery in the world; and so much misery could not befal man, but that he is worthy of much more. Far be it from us then to grieve, because many heavenly benefits are not bestowed on us; seeing we are not worthy even of the least of them, no not of the very life we carry about with us. Which although our flesh think a very hard saying, yet if we will obtain the grace of God, the truth is to be spoken; and every true penitent sinner must be a most severe judge and upbraider of himself. Wherein then should a man open

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his mouth? Truly, I think whatever man you are, it is better for you to say, you can say nothing; it is better for you to lay your hand upon your mouth, than to open it at all in your own justification; it is better for you to open it only in these two words, viz. *Peccavi* and *Miserere;* that is, Lord! I have sinned; have thou mercy upon me a sinner. And certainly, God himself requires not of a man, but that he deplore his sins, and humbly crave pardon; which two, whosoever shall neglect, he may be said to have omitted the best and most needful part.

§ 14. Weep not therefore, O man! for your body, either because it is naked, or because it is afflicted with hunger and cold, or because it suffers persecution, or because it is restrained in bands, or because it is sick and weak; but humble yourself before the Lord, and send forth tears for your soul, which is constrained to dwell in flesh and blood as in a house of bondage, and thereby is rendered obnoxious to sin and death. "Unhappy man, that I am!" you must say, "Oh! who shall deliver me from this body of sin?" And this christian acknowledgment and consciousness of your own proper and inward misery, this godly sorrow working repentance, this thirst after the grace of God, this faith firmly fastened on Christ alone, opens to you the door of grace in Christ, by which God comes into your soul. Be zealous therefore and repent: "For, behold I stand (saith the Lord) at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and I will sup with him, and he with me." Which supper is nothing verily, but the perfect remission of sins, as it is joined with divine consolation, and a divine life and happiness.

§ 15. At this sacred door of faith, our most loving God, at his own time, meets the wretched soul, and enters in, that he may take possession, filling the same with ineffable joys; there it is that the truth arises from the earth, and justice looks from heaven: here it is that mercy and truth meet one another; that justice and peace kiss each other: here it is that the returning offender Magdalene, the soul of man, now all broken with-

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in and confused, and pouring forth tears, anoints the precious feet of her Lord, washes them with her tears, and wipes them with the hairs of her head, expressing all the marks of a most profound humility. Here it is that the spiritual and mystical priest, in the holy ornaments of faith, offers up the true sacrifice, even the contrite heart and lowly spirit, with the incense of true repentance and contrition. This is the true holy water, the water of purification, wherewith the mystical Israel are washed and made clean, by faith and the efficacy of the blood of Christ. And thus now, O christians, it appears how by the acknowledgment of your own misery, and by faith in Christ, you may attain to the grace of God: and that by how much any one is in his own judgment more wretched, even so much is he the more dearly beloved of God; and shall be by him adorned with greater favours and higher blessings.

CHAP. XX.

How by true Contrition a Christian's Life is daily amended, and he made continually more and more fit for the Kingdom of Heaven.

2 cor. vii. 10.—*Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: But the sorrow of the world worketh death.*

§ 1. TRUE christianity consists only in pure faith, love, and a holy life; which holiness of life, springing up in the soul with faith and love, and therewith flowing out of it, has its beginning out of true contrition. And this contrition is never without a strict and severe knowledge of one's self, whereby we perceive daily more and more our own defects, and so are led to amend them day by day: and thereby we arrive to a participating of the righteousness and holiness of Christ by faith, the which cannot be obtained by any other means. Wherein, if we walk, as having the continual fear of God before us, after the example of good children and loyal subjects, we must be sure not to nourish any thing that belongs to

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the flesh. "All things are lawful for me (says the true christian) but all things are not expedient. Also all things are indeed lawful for me; but all things edify not," or make me better: For even as a dutiful son in his father's house does not all which seems good to him; though it were even lawful for him so to do; but warily observes the will and pleasure of his father, and as it were, by the eye of his imagination setting him still before him, consults with him, before ever he come to say or do any thing: so a true christian, as the child of God, will behave himself in his father's house, which is the church of God; will not allow himself in all things lawful, but will chastise his senses with christian moderation, and will neither do or speak any thing without consulting first his Father in heaven, or without having the fear of God before his eyes as actually present.

§ 2. Notwithstanding this, it is certain, that for the most part, men are without the fear of God; and thence it is that they addict themselves so to worldly pleasure; not knowing, or not considering that it is better far, continually to fear God, than to wallow in the mire of the pleasures of this world; for the fear of God is the very foundation and beginning of wisdom, and of true devotion; all which the corruption and delight of this world utterly extinguishes. For even as by daily contrition, and habitual mortification of the flesh, man is day by day renewed, according to that of the apostle, *Although our outward man* be daily broken, *yet our inward man is daily renewed* and repaired, in bearing heavenly fruits and celestial graces, of an inexplicable sweetness. So contrariwise, the pleasure of the world is the beginning of folly; and the pursuit after it, is madness: For it brings with it heaviness of heart, vexation of spirit, and a wounding of conscience; yea, so great hence is the calamity of the soul, and so heavy the loss of the heavenly gift, (a loss which necessarily flows from the pleasure of the flesh, and from worldly delights) as he that duly calls the same to mind, cannot but exceedingly fear and dread any of the fleshly and worldly joys, which serve but to divert him from those that are spiritual and heavenly,

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and to quench in him the most sweet grace of devotion that brings the soul into the kingdom of God.

§ 3. Two things now there are which, whosoever considers, and seriously ponders with himself, he can be neither affected with worldly pleasures, nor moved with outward calamities. The one is the pain of the damned; which whosoever shall consider deeply, it will be impossible that he should be ever heartily merry. The other is, the life eternal of the blessed. And whosoever has but once taken this rightly to heart, he cannot for that cause ever put it out of his mind again, nor get quite free of it, do almost whatever he can. Nevertheless, the levity of our hearts hinders us that we cannot so seriously revolve hereupon as we ought to do. And hence it is no wonder, we are both without this wholesome contrition and sorrow, and also so very ignorant of, and unexperienced in, the celestial and divine joys.

§ 4. Now it is the property and marks of a true christian, to be always equally minded: For he rejoices very sparingly (if it all) in earthly things, being full of the divine pleasures, and of life eternal. Neither is he carried away immoderately with calamities, or dejected in adversity, but for the loss of the soul only, which he bears so, as for that cause all his life-time he does not refuse to account it a thing worthy of lamentation. And for this only therefore, even for this immortal spirit, that it may not be lost, he is concerned. For a christian, he knows, loses nothing that is even never so little, of these frail things which perish, but he shall receive for it a thousand-fold in another world: but if the soul once perish, it can never be repaired, or again recovered. Blessed then is the man that finds this godly sorrow, and with that finds the celestial and spiritual pleasure also. But how often, alas! do we perversely and absurdly laugh, when we ought rather to weep! seeing there is no true liberty, no solid delight, no substantial satisfaction, but in the fear of God, and in a right conscience: The which, without faith, and without an holy life, can never be attained nor kept. For faith accompanied with this holy divine sorrow, which is wrought by the Holy Ghost, goes on day by day to correct all

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the defects of man: Which surely means, if any man neglect, he loses the best cause and best part of living; forasmuch as thereby he is an adversary to the new life, he hinders the kingdom of God in himself, he continues a captive under the chains of sin; neither can he be set free from the weight of corruption, nor cured of the blindness and hardness of his heart.

§ 5. Whereupon it follows, that he only deserves the name of a prudent and a wise man, who declines with all his might and study, whatever he understands to be an obstacle to his amendment of life, and to his proficiency in the heavenly gifts and divine oracles. Neither does he that is thus minded, determine to flee those things only whereby calamities may arise to the body, and to the faculties and concerns thereof; but much more does he avoid those which he perceives to be grievous to the mind, or any ways burthensome to the spirit, and an impediment of the soul's spiritual progress.

§ 6. Blessed is the man who flees from whatever may obstruct the correction of his faults, or stop his progress in the way of Christ. Blessed and happy is the man who has learnt not only to avoid all that may hurt his body and goods, but more especially all that may hurt his soul. For this is the true wisdom; and to withstand all that may oppose our true and eternal happiness, is indeed the true valour, which shall be crowned with immortal honour. Fear not therefore, but be of good courage; yea, be strong in the Lord, and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the word and the law of perfection, which (not Moses the servant, but) Christ the Son has himself commanded thee. Be a good soldier of Jesus Christ, and strictly observe all his orders, not turning from them to the right hand or to the left, that so you may indeed prosper whithersoever you go; when you go forth to battle against his and your enemies, and in all whatsoever you do. Be of good cheer then; for, behold, he will be with you; and approve yourself a man of valour, in resisting the wicked world, and the evil thereof, according to that of St. Paul, "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." An evil habit must be overcome with a good one: See you

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despair not hereat: This is a thing not impossible. For there is no cause why you should think yourself sick of incurable or insuperable evils, if you but reflect, in the first place, upon your own mind, and view there your own defects in order to a cure; and do not presumptuously or over curiously cast a rash censure on others, or judge of your neighbour, or take upon you to admonish him, before you shall have controlled and amended yourself. Your evils at home must first be overcome, before you will be put into a state to overcome those that are abroad. Never therefore think of amending others by admonition, by exhortation, by correction, or otherwise, if you have not, by the grace of God, first amended yourself. The true contrition of heart is the beginning of the way which leads to the blessed kingdom of light and love: And happy are you verily, if you be indeed entered into this way, and walk therein as through the valley of tears; for you will surely reap in joy at the day of harvest. Others also shall be converted to God, gladly submitting to walk with you in this way of holy penitence, when by the light of your conversation, they shall be convinced that you are led of God.

§ 7. And if it should happen that this daily penitence and spiritual contrition, beget reproach, and bring evil reports with respect to you; and if for that cause, the good will of men grow cold towards you, take heed that you grieve not at it: but rather complain of yourself, as becomes a true penitent, and live christian-like, as your heart desires, and as you ought in all good works, to equal the dignity of the name of a christian. For it is meet for you to be afflicted by the world, and scorned by it, that thence God may delight in you, according to that which he himself has declared, saying, "I dwell on high in the holy place; with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit do I dwell." And why? it is that he may quicken the humble spirit, and contrite heart. He says, even the high and lofty one that inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy, says it; That it is "to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive (and exhilarate) the heart of the contrite one."

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§ 8. It is impossible that divine and worldly pleasure should at one and the same time reside in the heart of a man: so very contrary they are to each other; so utterly disagreeable in their natures, their causes, their effects; so different in their offspring, and their fruits. The pleasure of the world is begotten in prosperity; but the other, which is of heaven, is begotten in adversity. I acknowledge it indeed to be, not only beside, but even against nature, to rejoice in adversity, according to that of the apostle; "As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet being rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." Notwithstanding which, I say, the grace of God does mend, purify, change, and transmute nature: and that hereupon the apostles so greatly rejoiced, because they were accounted worthy to suffer so many evil things for the name of Jesus Christ. Wherefore rejoice, O christian, and be glad, forasmuch as you also are "counted worthy to suffer shame for his name." For you are to know that this is the way of the cross of the Lord, by which a transmutation of natures is effected: so that mourning is changed into joy, and joy into mourning; life into death, and death into life. Thus the apostles and primitive christians rejoiced exceedingly in tribulations; thus they became rich by being poor, and possessed all things by having nothing in this world: Thus they approved themselves in all things as the true ministers of God, or as the true disciples of the Lamb of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, and in all manner of distresses; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and yet alive to God in Christ.

§ 9. Neither do any true christians otherwise, who are by the regeneration become other men; forasmuch as they rejoice and are glad in adversity. And indeed, none of those things that disturb the old man, can ever disturb the new man, formed after Christ; who, with St. Paul, "even glorieth in tribulation." For a christian is a new creature, to whom tribulation itself is joyous. The old creature is troubled at it; but the new creature rejoices in it, not only patiently supporting it,

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but triumphantly glorying in it also. For the joy most certainly that is from above, is more noble than that which is from below; and the peace of God in the soul, surpasses, beyond comparison, all earthly pleasures. This joy, and peace, and pleasure, begotten in the soul, is that indeed which the world perceives not, as also believes not; because it is not of the world: But which he perceives very well, who by the contumely and contempt of Christ borne by him, shews that he belongs to Christ, and not to the world. And hereof if we be ignorant, and perceive it not in us, let us be fully persuaded, that this happens to us by reason of the love of the world still abiding in us. It is also an infallible mark that we are not yet arrived to the true humility.

§ 10. A truly humble man thinks himself worthy of afflictions and tribulations, and unworthy of divine consolations. But by how much the more he thinks himself unworthy of these, so much more largely is he visited of God with them. And the more and oftener he deplores his sin, the less is he affected to the world. So that hereby, he at length comes to be a stranger to the world, and passes through it as unconcerned in it; being touched neither with the good, nor with the evil of it. He has now no longer any affection left for the world, or for the things thereof: he pities them, and mourns over them, that are affected to it; and not only so, but it becomes still more grievous and bitter to him thereby, yea, exceeding bitter. Here a fountain of tears is opened, and great lamentation, because of his captivity as in a strange land. He who considers himself thence as is meet, finds more wherein to mourn, than wherein to rejoice: And he also who examines another man's life, shall gather thence more things worthy of pity, than of envy. Why did Christ weep over Jerusalem, even Jerusalem which persecuted him, and put him to death? Their sins and blindness were evidently the cause of it. Let us then think the same thing of ourselves, and take up in like manner with him, our lamentation also even for ourselves, and for others; since no other matter more heavy can be, and none more wor-

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thy of tears will appear to us, than both our own sins and the impenitence of the world.

§ 11. If it came to a man's mind, and was fixed upon him, that he should die presently, and that he was then immediately to appear and to plead his cause before God, as often as he in a pensive manner should discuss the matter with himself concerning the helps and supports of this frail mortal life; surely he would be abundantly more serious, and more diligent in the amendment of his life, and in all the duties of repentance. And if, moreover, the same person should call also to mind, hell torments, he could not then but despise the world, and in comparison of these, would think all the afflictions of this world pleasant; and would gladly undergo them, so he might escape these. From which consideration we are the more distant, because we are continually so much inveigled with the enticements of the flesh, which bewitch our understandings.

§ 12. It behoves a christian, hence most firmly to persuade himself, that if it go well with his body, there is great danger of its not going well with his soul: And if he flow in all manner of pleasure of this world, that he is not a subject so fit for the pleasures of another. If the body be pampered, if the flesh be humoured, if the desires of it be gratified, if the life of it be vigorous, let him conclude that his spirit then is dead; but that he lives, if he crucify his flesh with his desires and lusts; forasmuch as the one is the death of the other. Wherefore if the spirit live, it must needs be that the body spiritually die, and be offered up a living sacrifice.

§ 13. Which way of life, howsoever despised by the world, it has ever been the custom of all the saints, from the beginning of the world, to observe; they eating and drinking always with thanksgiving, the bread and cup of tears, according to that of holy David, "Thou feedest us with the bread of tears, and thou givest us tears to drink in great measure. And in another psalm, "My tears were unto me my bread both day and night." This was his daily bread: And this bread of tears, with a certain heavenly leaven received into it, faith by a wonderful sweetness most artfully mixes and tempers: And

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the drink of tears is pressed from the tender grapes of devout hearts, by true repentance, and that sorrow which works out a steadfast salvation. As on the contrary, the sorrow of this world brings forth death, and all that is hard to this life, whether it arise from the loss of honour, or of temporal and frail goods. And this is often so sharp, so bitter, so cruel, and so impatient, as men frequently catch themselves thereby in a fool's net, and so bring themselves to their own deaths by divers ways: of which there are not wanting many examples in the histories both of the ethnicks and of the christians so called. But these latter ought to understand better: And certainly they cannot but grant it were better to be more moderate, and to shew themselves herein better christians, who know it to be as unworthy their profession, as it is in itself absurd, for the loss of a few frail perishing goods, to lose their own souls, which even the whole world will not recompense. Far be it from us then, that we should do this for any temporal goods, and should not mourn or thirst after the eternal; seeing the use of the former is most short, and at farthest, ends with death. For "when a man dieth, (says the Psalmist) he shall carry nothing away: neither doth his glory descend with him." Now this law is equally spoken to all, and the penalty of it takes us all alike by the collar; that is, no less the king than the meanest beggar. For as the body of the one is, so is also the body of the other; the dead body of both putrifies and turns alike to corruption. "Hence a living dog is better than a dead lion," as says Solomon. Nevertheless, the Lord will destroy at length the veil of the shadow of death, which is spread over all nations, and will swallow up death in victory, and will fill with light and cheerfulness, the faces of them that are in bonds among all people, and wipe away the tears from every face of him that has believed, as it is written, "There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

§ 14. Therefore remember to carry moderately the loss of earthly things, and consider that the whole world is not worth one soul for which Christ vouchsafed to

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die. Since if you do not prosecute these frail things with so unruly and disorderly a love, you will be the less troubled at the loss of them; seeing it is the condition of things loved, that these, when they are lost, are the more desired. And so the labour of fools afflicts them, according to the Proverb, which says, *Labor stultorum affliget eos:* i. e. The labour of fools is a tormenting wheel to themselves; or as the preacher expresses it, "The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them," Eccl. x. 15. For thus the children of this present adulterous age and generation gather goods with great labour, and with no less fear do they possess them: and then with the greatest grief, part with them. This is the sorrow of the world begetting death. But to proceed,

§ 15. We read in St. John's revelations, that they that followed and adored the beast, *had no rest:* so in like manner, all they that adore the great and goodly beast of the earthly mammon, may be said to have no rest day nor night, because they worship the image of this world, that passes away, and receive its mark, both in their foreheads, and in their hands. These are a kind of men most wretched, most unquiet, and most full of care and sorrow, whom perhaps we shall not ill compare to camels, or mules: For even as these by rocks and steep hills, carrying gold, and silver, and silken garments, pearls, aromatic spices, and generous wines, on their backs, draw many attendants and servants with them for security; and so at evening coming to their stables, all their precious ornaments, and rich embroidered clothes and garments, are taken from them, and they now being weary and quite stripped, appear to be what they are, that is, no better than miserable beasts of burden, and there remain now upon them nothing but the prints of their stripes, and the foul marks of blows to be seen: So those, in like manner, who in this world did shine in gold and silks, in *purple and fine linen*, the day of their death being come, have nothing left but the prints and scars of their sins, through the abuse of the riches that were committed to them.

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§ 16. Learn then, O learn to leave the world before it leave thee, which will be with most bitter pains: but to him who does this, and first separates by faith his soul from the world; it is easy, I say, for him to be separated in body from it; neither does he grieve at all for the loss of it. It is a miserable delusion to put this off to a sick-bed, or to old age. For as the Israelites, when they were just about to leave Egypt, were daily pressed with greater burdens by Pharaoh, going about utterly to overthrow and extirpate their whole progeny; so the infernal Pharaoh, envying our eternal salvation, when we are near to death, will be still pressing us with greater burdens of this world, and binding us even with stronger affections to it. For he is wont to infest souls with so much greater care for, and more rapacious desire of earthly things, at such a time; which blindness of old people is so much the more remarkable, because they cannot carry the least dust away with them, of all those heaps of money which they have gotten, into the kingdom of heaven. Since if we know any thing, we know that way is so very strait, that all earthly things exceedingly hinder the passage of the soul through it. Well, you grant, that the way is strait which leads to heaven, as it is written, "Strait is the gate, and narrow the way which leadeth to life, and few there be that find it." But if you verily indeed believe so, how is it that you can defer a matter of such importance as this? Or think it will grow more easy and familiar to you by so long forbearing to acquaint yourself with it? Certainly, if it be so very strait and difficult, as even you yourself make it to be; so hard to find, and harder to walk in; you cannot do better than to get acquainted with it as soon as possible; and to omit nothing that can be done, to get ready for your passage out of this world, that when you shall depart hence, you may be received by angels into the everlasting kingdom, which is prepared for all them that overcome the world.

§ 17. As the husband-man on the barn-floor separates the wheat from the chaff, even so death sets free the seed of the faithful souls, from the chaff of the world. But as for the men of the world, it is otherwise; they

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are nothing else indeed, but chaff, carried hither and thither with the wind. Therefore, do that which you have to do, with all your might, and let not this which has been here said, depart out of your mind which we brought out of St. Paul, namely, how that the sorrow which is according to God, works repentance to a firm and irreversible salvation, but that the sorrow of the world brings death.

CHAP. XXI.

What the true Worship of God is.

LEV. X. 1, 2.—*The sons of Aaron offered strange fire before the Lord, and fire went out from the Lord and devoured them.*

§ 1. THIS fire is called *strange*, because different from that which was continually kept burning upon the altar, and with which, according to the command of God, the burnt-offerings were consumed; wherefore it is a type of a false divine worship. Hence the sons of Aaron deserved to be destroyed with avenging flames, because they had violated the divine precept.

§ 2. This displeasure of the most righteous God, do all such in like manner provoke, who from the proper motion of their own mind, and a singular presumption of devotion, or religious sanctity, set up a new and peculiar worship of God; which not being enjoined by himself, moves him to indignation, anger, and revenge, because "God is a consuming fire."

§ 3. Which wrath of the heavenly Majesty, lest we should also incur, let us consider wherein the true worship of God consists. For the punishment of temporary fire, inflicted by God under the Old Testament, upon false worship, is to us a proof, that he will also under the new dispensation, take most severe vengeance on all strange worship, as with everlasting, so also with temporal fire, namely, wars and desolations of the earth,

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and effusion of blood, no less terrible perhaps than any burning whatever.

§ 4. And indeed, the nature and manner of true divine worship, will easily appear to us, by comparing the two Testaments. The worship used under the former dispensation, was all outward and typical, full of figures and shadows, exhibiting the Messias as at a great distance; pompous also with ceremonies, which the Jewish nation was strictly, and according to the rigour of the letter, bound to observe. In which rites and images, the faithful of that people beholding the Messias, as it were a-far off, were saved by faith in him, according to the divine promise. But that which God under the New Testament commands, consists not in external* figures, ceremonies, rites, ordinances, and laws; but is all inward, requiring spirit and truth; that is, principally demanding faith in Christ, because in him was the temple, altar, sacrifice, ark of the covenant, and priesthood, with the whole moral and ceremonial law completely verified and fulfilled. Whence it follows; that we are restored into christian liberty, and delivered from the curse of the law, and Jewish ceremonies; so that, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, with a free heart, and willing mind, we may serve God, our faith and conscience not being enslaved by any human traditions.

§ 5. Moreover, to the true, spiritual, internal, and christian worship, there are *three* things principally required. 1. The knowledge of God, which never is without faith. 2. The knowledge of sin, accompanied with repentance. And 3. The knowledge of grace, together with remission of sins: and these three, that make up the true worship of God, are one, and yet three; in like manner as God himself has unity in trinity. For in the knowledge of God alone is contained both repentance, and remission of sins.

§ 6. Now that knowledge of God consists in faith, which apprehends Christ, and in him, and through him,

* He is here speaking of the Judaical ceremonial laws, and of a worldly sanctuary, or church: but his meaning is not that there should be nothing external now under the New Testament in the worship of God, such as preaching, sacraments, &c.

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discerns God: his omnipotence, love, mercy, righteousness, truth, wisdom; all which are God himself. For what is God? Surely no other, than pure omnipotence, pure love and mercy, pure righteousness, truth and wisdom. And the same is to be said of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit.

§ 7. But whatever God is, that he is not to himself only, but also to me, by his gracious will made manifest in Christ. Thus to me is God omnipotent, to me merciful, to me eternal righteousness, through faith and remission of sins; to me also everlasting truth and wisdom. Thus also is it with Christ, who is made to me eternal omnipotence, the Almighty Head and Prince of life, my most merciful Saviour, everlasting charity, unchangeable righteousness, truth and wisdom; according to that of the apostle, Christ "is of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." All which is in due manner also verified of the Holy Spirit.

§ 8. And this is the true knowledge of God, which consists in faith. It is not surely some naked science, but a cheerful, vivid, and effectual reliance, in which I feel the rays and influences of the divine omnipotence really to descend upon me, insomuch that I perceive myself by him to be upheld and preserved, "in him to live, move, and have my being;" and that I also sweetly taste the riches of his goodness and mercy. Is it not of pure love whatever has, by God the Father, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, been done for you, me, and us all? What more consummate and more extensive righteousness than that, by which he sets us at liberty from sin, death, hell, and the devil? And do not his truth and wisdom always, and in all things, conspicuously appear?

§ 9. This then is the true and substantial faith, which consists in a living and effectual reliance upon God, and not in any noise and vain sound of words. In this knowledge of God in faith, we must, as the children of God, daily make further and further advances towards perfection. And hence the apostle pours out most fervent prayers, "That we may know the love of Christ,

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which passeth all knowledge;" as if he had said; though the whole care of all our life were only employed in learning the love of Christ, yet would there still remain a continual and never-failing matter for our further search. Neither is it to be thought, that this knowledge consists in a barren and unactive speculation of the catholic love of Christ; but we must, in our own hearts, partake, taste, and experience the sweetness, delight, power, and vital influx of this immense love, through the word and faith. Can we say that he has known the love of Christ, who never tasted its sweetness? Hence it is by the apostle said of some that had learnt it by an experimental perception, that they had "tasted of the heavenly gift, and the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come;" all which is effected by faith through the word. The same is also understood by the "effusion of the love of God in our hearts by the Holy Ghost;" in which consists the fruit and efficacy of the word of God. And this only is the true knowledge of God, that proceeds from tasting and experience, and is founded on a living and operating faith. And for this reason, the epistle to the Hebrews calls faith a *substance*, and *an evidence* certain and well-grounded. And this knowledge of God, that arises from a living faith, is not the least part of that inward and spiritual worship of God; as, on the other hand, faith is a spiritual, living, and heavenly gift, yea, the very light and power of God.

§ 10. When therefore this true knowledge of God is attained, by which God presents himself as it were to be touched and tasted by the soul, according to that of the Psalmist, "O taste and see that the Lord is good," it is impossible, but that straightway sincere repentance must ensue; that is, a real renovation of mind, and amendment of life. For, from a sense and stable knowledge of the divine Omnipotence, proceeds humility, since he must needs submit himself to the mighty hand of God, who has perceived its irresistible power. From a taste of the divine mercy arises charity towards our neighbour: For no man can be uncharitable, who has experienced the divine compassion. And who can re-

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fuse any charitable assistance to his neighbour, that considers how God, out of his pure mercy, has bestowed himself upon him? From the long-suffering of God springs a wonderful patience towards our neighbour, and that to such a degree, that were it possible, a true christian could be killed seven times a day, and as many times restored to life, yet would he always willingly forgive his murderer, mindful of the preceding boundless mercy of God to himself. From the divine righteousness comes the acknowledgment of sins, so that with the prophet Daniel we pray, confessing, "Righteousness belongeth unto thee, O Lord, but unto us confusion of face." And with another prophet, "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified." And again, "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquity, O Lord, who shall stand?" From an apprehension of the truth of God flows fidelity and uprightness towards our neighbour; so that all fraud, deceit, and lying, is now relinquished; the sincere christian thus reasoning in himself: 'God forbid I should deal deceitfully with my neighbour, for so I should offend the truth of God, which is God himself; who having dealt so faithfully and sincerely with me, it would be great wickedness, if I should do otherwise by my neighbour.' The consideration of the eternal divine wisdom produces the fear of God. For he who knows God to be the searcher of hearts, viewing its most secret recesses, must needs dread the eyes of that divine Majesty. "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? He that formed the eye, shall he not see? Therefore, wo unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say, who seeth us? and who knoweth us? surely your turning of things upside down, shall be esteemed as the potter's clay: for shall the work say of him that made it, he made it not? Or shall the thing formed, say of him that formed it, he had no understanding?" Isa. xxix. 15, 16. "Great is he in counsel, and mighty in work, whose eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men, to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings. For can any hide himself in secret places,

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that I should not see him? saith the Lord. There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves; for behold his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he sees all his goings. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord."

§ 11. And thus much of a true knowledge of God, in which repentance consists; and of repentance that brings renovation of mind; and of renovation of mind, which is accompanied with amendment of life. And this knowledge, together with those things that attend it, makes up the other part of the inward divine worship, and is that sacred fire, by the appointment of God to be used with the sacrifices; lest the divine wrath should be kindled against us, and we be consumed by the fire of his incensed vengeance.

§ 12. The injunction of God to the priests, not to drink wine or any intoxicating liquors when they were to enter the tabernacle of the congregation, was a type of this repentance, which in a spiritual sense extends to all christians. For if we would enter into the tabernacle of God, and attain to everlasting life, it is necessary we should abstain from the lusts of the world, and of the flesh, and whatsoever tends to bring the mind in subjection to the body. For the love of the world, love of pleasure, pride, and other vices, are like palatable wine, whereby the powers of the soul and spirit being clouded, are at last brought under subjection and bondage to the flesh. For even as Noah and Lot were so far overtaken with wine, as to expose their nakedness; so honour, pleasure, and riches, like generous wine, invade, assault, disorder, and subdue the soul and spirit; whence a man is prohibited from entering into the tabernacle of God; that is, kept back from the knowledge of him, and meddling with things sacred, having lost that noble discerning faculty, that distinguishes between things sacred and profane, clean, and unclean; insomuch that he understands nothing at all of divine and heavenly things, and therefore is incapable to instruct in sound doctrine those that are under his care. The understanding and thoughts of such are not illuminated with the rays of celestial light; but, being overcome, and enraged with the wine of

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worldly lusts, rush headlong, at length, into most absolute and everlasting darkness.

§ 13. But this repentance, or sincere contrition and grief for sin, as also true faith in Christ, is naturally attended with remission of sins; which as it is only to be obtained through the merit of Christ, so the benefit of this merit can no man claim to himself, without repentance; nor consequently, neglecting this, expect the remission of sins. Wherefore repentance was necessary, even to the thief on the cross, that his sins being remitted, he might accompany Christ into paradise. That it was not careless or superficial, but proceeded from the bottom of the heart, affected with a holy contrition, appears from the reproof to his companion; "Dost not thou fear God? we receive the reward of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss:" and from his humble and serious request addressed to Christ: "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom;" which are most certain proofs of a contrite heart faithfully embracing Christ.

§ 14. This gracious absolution from sins, which a penitent heart in true faith apprehends and obtains, supplies all our deficiencies not yet fully repaired; and that through the death and blood of Christ, whereby he suffered for annulling them, and as it were rendering undone all our offences, and by his most abundant satisfaction conquering the power of our iniquities, counterpoising the dead weight. Hence David exclaims, "Purge me with hysop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

§ 14. Hence also it is, that God is said to forget sins, and no more to call them to remembrance, whenever a sinner turns unto him; for whatever is fully and completely paid, yea, erased out, must needs be buried in oblivion. But conversion must go before, according to the order proposed by the prophet; "Wash ye, make you clean, cease to do evil, and then come and let us reason together: Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." As if he had said: "Ye, who require your sins to be forgiven, according to my covenant and promise, go to, if you please, and call me

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to account. I do not indeed deny, that I promised you remission of sins; but on no other terms, than your repentance. Where is now your repentance? Where true and living faith? If you have these, all is well! It shall not be my fault, if your sins, though as crimson in grain, i. e. so deeply dyed, that neither heaven nor earth can blot them out, are not pardoned and made whiter than the snow." Repentance therefore, repentance, I say, is the true confession of sins; which if you find in yourself mixed with faith, rest assured, that Christ, by virtue of his death and blood, will forgive you your sins. Namely, that blood, which for us cries unto heaven to God, and so procures remission of sin.

§ 15. With this sense of sin, when any one is thoroughly affected, he hastens in spirit to those cities of refuge, whereof three, Bezer, Ramoth, and Golan, are mentioned by Moses, being by him set apart, to the end that he who had unawares killed his neighbour, might flee into them.

§ 16. But, alas! O Lord, how often have we killed our neighbour with tongue, thoughts, hatred, envy, anger, revenge, and unmercifulness! Let us then fly upon the wings of faith and repentance, to the sanctuary of the grace and mercy of God, which is the merit and cross of Christ. By getting thither we are safe, nor will the revenger measure back unto us in that measure with which we served our neighbour. For by those three cities Christ is really shadowed out, who only is deservedly termed Bezer; that is, a *fenced tower*, according to that of Solomon: "The name of the Lord (Christ Jesus) is a strong tower: The righteous runneth into it, and is safe." He also is the true Ramoth, which word signifies *exalted;* according to what was declared by the Holy Ghost, that he should be "exalted and extolled, and be very high: For in the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth." Nor have we any other Golan besides him; who, as the original of the word imports, is no other than a *heap of favours*, and as it were a store-house of celestial gifts. Whence we read in the Psalms: "With the Lord there is mercy; and with him is plente-

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ous redemption." And in the epistle to the Romans, "The Lord is rich unto all that call upon him."

§ 17. And so much concerning the third part of the inward, spiritual, and true divine worship, which is a real and experimental knowledge of grace with an intimate sense of the full and meritorious satisfaction of Jesus Christ issuing from the knowledge of God; which knowledge, in like manner, is the source of repentance, as repentance is of remission of sins; which though three, yet are indeed but one, and are sustained as on a foundation by the solid knowledge of God.

§ 18. This third part did God shadow out unto us by the priests, who were to eat of the offerings of the Lord: by which action nothing else is intimated, but a suitable application of the death and blood of Christ by faith. And whereas this was to be done in the holy place, hereby repentance is denoted: For faith, by virtue of the merit and blood of Christ, renders a man in the sight of God, no less holy than if he had never polluted himself with sin; concerning which holy sanctuary, or purification, consider that of the prophet Ezekiel; "If the wicked will turn from all his sins, that he hath committed," by such a faith as works repentance, "all his transgressions, that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him."

§ 19. And thus the law of Moses is changed into spirit, or an inward, holy, and new life, and its sacrifices into repentance, by which we offer up to God our body and soul, together with sacrifices of praise, ascribing to him alone our knowledge, conversion, justification, and remission of sins, that God alone may be all, his grace worthily acknowledged, and with thankful hearts and tongues celebrated to all eternity. This then, as has so often been already said, is the true worship of God; of which also the prophet Micah says; "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" O when, therefore, shall we poor mortals become truly penitent, that we may obtain pardon of sins? seeing without that, it is not possible for us to arrive at this.

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But how can sins be remitted, where there is no sense of sin, where no anguish touches the mind, where no hunger of grace is to be found? And how can he grieve for sins, that refuses to abandon them, and to change his life and manners for a better? May God through Christ turn us, that so we may be turned!

§ 20. From these things it may now appear, that the true worship of God is in the mind, and consists in the knowledge of God, and in true repentance, mortifying the flesh, and through grace, renewing man after the image of God. In this order is man made the holy temple of God, in which, through the holy Spirit, a worship is performed that is truly divine; namely, faith, charity, hope, humility, patience, supplication, thanksgiving, and the praise of God.

§ 21. But though this worship and service has regard to God himself, and is performed to him only, yet far be it from us to believe, that God has any lack of our adoration or service, or receives any advantage thereby: let us rather think, that such is the great mercy of God to miserable men, as to be willing to impart himself wholly with all his good things to us, and in us to live, operate, and dwell, provided we on the other hand are ready, by the true knowledge of him, by faith and repentance, to entertain him, that in our heart, as in a work-house, he may bring his own work to perfection.

§ 22. For of God no work is approved and accepted, but that of which himself is the author in us. Therefore has he commanded us to repent, believe, pray, fast; not that to him in any wise, but to us, the benefit might redound. For to God no man can give, nor can he take away thing; him none can profit, none can hurt. Ours is the advantage if we are good, and our evil returns upon our own head. But what harm can you do to God, if you continue in impiety?

§ 23. He therefore commands himself to be served on yours, not his own account; who, being love itself, herein surely is delighted, and service, as it were, is done to him, if many are found disposed, to whom he may impart the streams of his love; yea, even himself.

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For even as a mother cannot but love the tender infant hanging at her breasts, while it lies greedily sucking: So God is to be esteemed, in his sovereign way, to take a singular pleasure in the readiest communication of himself.

CHAP. XXII.

As a tree is known by its Fruit, so is a true Christian by Charity; and by a Life which is truly according to Christ.

PSALM xcii. 12, 15.—*The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree: He shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age: they shall be fat and flourishing. To shew that the Lord is upright: He is our Rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.*

§ 1. NOT the christian name, but a christian life, shews a true christian: let this therefore be the care of a true christian, that in him Christ may be manifested, and made visible to others, by charity, humility, and benignity of nature. In whom Christ lives not, he, of consequence, is not a christian. And this life having fixed its roots within, the very spirit and heart of a man must spring from this inward principle, as an apple from the internal virtue of the tree. Yea, it is necessary our life should be directed by the Spirit of Christ, and fashioned after his example; according to that of the apostle: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his:" for all life proceeds from spirit: but such as is now the spirit that inwardly acts, moves, and governs in any; such also will he outwardly appear to be: from whence it is evident, how necessary the holy Spirit is to a truly christian life; which therefore Christ has not only commanded us importunately to pray for, but has also promised it; namely, the spirit of regeneration, by which we are quickened in Christ, unto a new, spiritual, and heavenly

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life. And from the life and never-dying power of this spirit must spring every christian virtue, "and righteousness must flourish as the palm-tree, and like the cedar of Lebanon, which the Lord hath planted."

§ 2. Whence it follows, that a man must be first internally renewed in the spirit of his mind after the image of God; so that his inward desires and affections being conformed to Christ, (which the apostle Paul terms "The new man created after the image of God") may produce a suitable life issuing continually out of the heart itself; and that the outward life of a man may be nothing but a constant expressing of that vital principle which prevails within. Yea, seeing God, according to the Psalmist, "searcheth the heart and reins," it is surely most reasonable that a man should possess, in the more secret and retired corners of his heart and mind, even more, than appears in his outward life, visible to all.

§ 3. But although in our inward part we attain not to the holiness and purity of angels, yet it is but just we should aspire unto it; seeing God approves the desires of our spirit, covetous of a further purification, "The holy Spirit also helping our infirmities, and making intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered;" yea, the blood of Christ purifying us by faith, so that we are without spot or wrinkle. In this respect now we possess not the purity, holiness, and righteousness of some angel, but that of Christ, yea, and Christ himself. For,

§ 4. We are to believe that this holiness or righteousness which is free, and is upon us bestowed of mere grace, is far surpassing the purity and innocence of the very angels themselves, as being Christ himself. Yet notwithstanding it must renew our body, soul, and spirit; and clothe us with a holy life. And this life, though like a tender palm-tree, must yet daily wax more and more vigorous in us, and further increase in Christ. Now so much does any one grow in Christ, as he makes progress in faith, by virtue and a christian life, and advances in holiness. In a word, so far he profits as Christ

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lives in him. And this is to "flourish like the palm-tree."

§ 5. For even as the palm-tree, when depressed, mounts higher, so ought a christian to be daily renewed in tending heaven-wards, to strengthen himself every day with fresh purposes of walking suitably to his new name, and with unwearied endeavours, to avoid a false and counterfeit christianity; no otherwise than if he had this day been first initiated in the principles of true religion. For as one that enters into an office, has nothing more at heart than to acquit himself therein with applause; so also should we do, who are called unto Christ, "with an holy calling." This holy purpose, if it be not most deeply rooted in our mind, no amendment of life will ensue, no vigour in piety, no increase in Christ. Yea, the very quickening Spirit of Christ is wanting. For such a resolution of doing well, is the work of the Holy Spirit, and that preventing grace that allures, invites and moves all men. Happy therefore is the man, who with his ears and heart is attentive and obedient to him, and hearkens to the voice of the wisdom of God, "uttering her voice in the streets;" who duly considers, that all things he views with his eyes, are so many memorials of their Creator, by which he endeavours to draw mankind to the love of himself.

§ 6. Which divine drawing and impulse, as soon as we perceive, we should immediately put our hand to the work, and take care that so precious a moment wherein the obstacles are removed, do not slip away. This if slothfully neglected, other days and times may possibly succeed, in which we cannot think, hear, speak, or do good. Which being foreseen by the Eternal Wisdom, she every where calls on us, that by our carelessness we lose not the time, and neglect not the opportunity presented.

§ 7. Look upon a tree which in the open air expects unmoved, and admits readily the light of the sun, and the benign influences of heaven: In like manner also you are by the grace of God, and celestial powers, incessantly solicited; wherefore, let it be, O christian, your con-

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tinual care and study, that laying aside all worldly incumbrances, with a heart willing and prepared, you receive and entertain them.

§ 8. Call to mind, O man, the shortness of the time appointed for life! Seriously consider, how many opportunities of doing good, and reducing into practice the christian virtues, you have neglected. One half of your life has possibly been consumed in sleeping, and the other in eating and drinking, and other natural actions; so that when you come to the brink of the grave, you may be found scarcely to have so much as entered upon a better life.

§ 9. Every one ought so to live as he would wish to die. If you are afraid to die wickedly, lead a pious life: If you desire to leave the world as a christian, endeavour to be one in your life and actions while you are in it. Now he lives as a christian, who so demeans himself, as if he were every day to die; well-knowing that a good servant will at all times be ready at the call of his master. And God, by death as his officer, summons us all before him.

§ 10. "Blessed therefore is that servant, whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching: Of a truth, I say unto thee, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath." And who is he that watches, but he that suffers not himself to be seduced by the world, or its adorers? Let us therefore flee from that and these, well knowing that the manners of the age are as so many unprofitable shoots and branches; not useless only, but hurtful excrescences, oftentimes so far corrupting even a fruitful tree, that it ceases further to live and flourish.

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CHAP. XXIII.

He that would advance in the Life of Christ, must not entertain worldly Friendships.

PSAL. lxxxiv. 1, 2.—*How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.*

§ 1. YOU will do well to avoid the too frequent familiarity of worldly men. For as it is never better for our bodies, than when at home, where they can enjoy their full satisfaction; because we are no where so well accommodated, as when we are in our own house, where we have both liberty and power: even so it is ever best with the soul, when it is at rest in its own habitation and resting place, which is God. For whenever it wanders forth from this, thither it must return again, if it will enjoy true repose. Wander wheresoever you will, you shall find no rest any where but in Him; no liberty but in Him, no power but in Him alone: but your soul shall attain in Him to true liberty and power, and you shall find certainly that rest which the world cannot take from you. Wherefore be sure not to scatter yourself abroad. It is never worse with the soul, than when it strays from home: It is never better with the soul, than when it is at home; that is, resting in God its true original. For since it is God's offspring, it must needs return to God again, and live in God as in its true element; if it desire to be quiet, and meet with lasting satisfaction. Because this is the condition of every creature, which naturally seeks to live in its own proper element, and cannot live long out of it. And how can you, my soul, live out of the divine element? Return, O return to the fountain of your Being, for here will be your rest, here you will live in your own element; here, and here only, will happiness of life be found for you.

§ 2. Of all creatures this is observed, that they remain no where so advantageously, as from whence they drew their original. Thus the sea to the fishes, to birds the

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air, the earth to plants, and God to the soul is the place of rest, according to that of the Psalmist, "the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young." And where is that? It is even thine altar, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God. This, this is the resting-place of the winged soul, that is as the sparrow that has found herself a solitary place under the very altar, as it were, of her God, in whom her life and joy are hid.

§ 3. Nothing is more dangerous than familiarity with the world and worldly persons, to the life of a christian, who ought to live in God. He that allows a liberty of wandering abroad to his sons and daughters, creates mischief thereby to himself; and he, that by giving loose reins to his tongue and thoughts, suffers them to run at large through all the transactions of men, as so many circles of vanity, is sure to bring down much evil upon himself. But assure yourself, you will decline many grievous inconveniences, if you endeavour to confine them within the bounds of your own breast.

§ 4. "In the courts of the Lord our God, the plants of the Lord do flourish, and are as the cedars in Lebanon." Now what are these courts? They are the internal and spiritual festivals and sabbaths of our heart; which as Lebanon in the desert, flourish in a solitary retirement of mind, and abstraction of spirit. Labour to attain to this solitude of spirit, and you shall become fit to search into yourself, and to contemplate the wonders and benefits of God. Thus you will spread abroad like a cedar in Lebanus, and being planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of the house of your God.

§ 5. Neither are you to imitate at all, those admirers of subtle inventions and disputes, who take pleasure in the reading of nothing but what is fine, delicate, and witty; which yet, if rightly considered, deprave rather than improve the mind. Whatever does not promote the repose of the heart, and continual renovation of the mind, should neither be heard, nor spoken, nor read, nor so much as entertained in thought by a disciple of Christ, who will decline many scandals, and avoid many great

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inconveniences, by keeping within the circle and circumference of his heart, that which ought not to be promulgated abroad. Thus in the tents of the Lord his God, he flourishes as a goodly plant, and spreads forth his branches as the cedars of Lebanon. These tents are the secret tabernacle of the Spirit, or the inward and spiritual sabbath of the heart. And the flourishing Lebanon is the desert, and solitariness of the soul, in communion with God: which solitariness of spirit, you ought diligently to follow, that you may therein both search and examine yourself, and contemplate the wonders of God in his sanctuary. But those are not to be followed by you, who are delighted in reading pretty and quaint things whereby the heart is more provoked than quieted, more pleased than amended. Hence whatever does not further the quietness of the heart, let it be far from your ears, your mouth, your eyes, and your thoughts. For the trees of the Lord attend to nothing, but how to grow and profit in Christ. Now christians are these trees of God, that should daily grow and take deeper and deeper root in Christ their life. Hence St. Paul witnesses of himself, that besides *Christ, and him crucified*, he desired to *know nothing*. And this has been the general method of all the saints of God, who have to the utmost of their power, endeavoured, by carefully cherishing this blessed tranquillity of mind, and internal devotion, how they might approach nigher to the angelical manner of living, and might imitate those heavenly spirits, who, retreating under the pavilions of the Most High, do rest in him alone. Wherefore they strive with all diligence to live in holy silence, and after a divine manner, to emulate in their worship the celestial and blessed intelligences, and to hide themselves with them in God alone, as in the only centre and sabbath of their souls. One of whom I have heard say, That *so often as he conversed with men, he was always made less in some part or other than he was before:* Meaning, that he never left his conversation with God, to go into the company of any worldly creature, but that he came out of it not so much a man, as when he went into it; as being thereby deprived of some part of himself.

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§ 6. For since humanity consists properly in the similitude of God, and therefore God has defined man to be the image and likeness of himself ; it follows, that every one, the more unlike he is to God, the less a man he is ; and the nigher he unites himself to God, so much the more like him does he become. But with God none can be joined, who do not first withdraw themselves from the world. The nature of every seed is, to bring forth a plant of its own kind : so if the seed of God, namely, the holy Spirit and divine word, be in you, you will become a "tree of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified." And thus will your true humanity be preserved, as you grow up after his seed, in his likeness, and bring forth fruit according to the seed of the divine nature, which is implanted in yours.

§ 7. Nothing is more frequent, than that some word or other is dropped in the conversation of men, which being idle and vain, wounds and pollutes the soul, and chokes this divine seed. Wherefore there is no man who has more security, safety, and peace, than he who keeps at home, and restrains his thoughts, his words, and his senses from straying beyond their just bounds. He only deserves to be called a man, whose words and manners are according to reason. Diogenes the philosopher, being thus accosted by a trifling pretender to wit, *what I am, you are not ; but I am a man, therefore you are not ;* chastising his affected subtlety, pleasantly answered, *it will be more true if you begin with me.*

§ 8. He that will speak well, let him first learn well to be silent ; for to talk much is not eloquence, but prating. He that would rule his heart well, let him learn first to keep it well. He that would know how to command, must first learn to obey ; seeing it is impossible he can rule others aright, who knows not how to be subject and obedient to God. He that desires peace and serenity of mind, let him keep watch over his tongue, and endeavour to maintain a good conscience. For an evil one is like the troubled sea ; yet shall it find rest, if it return unto Christ by contrition and repentance. The dove which Noah sent out of the ark,

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not finding any place, returned thither again. This ark is Christ, and the church, having one only door or window, namely, *repentance*, through which we must go to Christ. For even as the dove did straightway retire again into the ark; so you in like manner must remember to do; that is, as oft as, floating in a sea of worldly business, you find yourself in danger, you must retire immediately into your heart, to Christ, lest by being too much tossed on the billows of the world, you are altogether deprived of tranquillity of mind.

§ 7. Whilst you converse amongst men, and deal in affairs of the world, see you always do it with fear, and with humility. Avoid all secure and inconsiderate rashness in acting. Remember that you are like a tender shoot which is tied to a pole, that it may the more safely spring up: so take care constantly to lean upon the staff of humility, and the fear of God, lest a tempest, suddenly arising, lay you level with the ground. Alas! how often is a man deceived, whilst too securely and unadvisedly he rushes into worldly business, and with a more than convenient freedom, converses with the world. Wherefore, persuade yourself it is no less unsafe trusting to the world, than to the sea. The external joy of the world, howsoever for a time it may sooth a man, and may seem to promise every thing prosperous and agreeable, yet, as the sea by a tempest, it may soon be disturbed and destroyed, leaving behind nought but the sting of an evil conscience.

§ 8. But if a man would seek after no pleasure to himself in what is perishing, but on the other hand, with a mind at liberty from secular affairs and cares, would give himself to divine meditation; then verily, it is not to be doubted but profound peace, sweet tranquillity, a joyful conscience, and divine comforts and visitations, would be his frequent entertainment. Yet must you first remove far from you those delights which the world affords, if you would have them succeeded by those that are divine. But whilst we will not be persuaded of these things, it falls out that our conversion, amendment, and devotion, which we might find within

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us, are, by our being too freely conversant with men, further lost amongst them. You may find within your breast, what you easily lose in an inconsiderate pursuit of external things. For what things within are found by resting, they are by seeking here and there unwarily lost. And even as a tree no where better prospers, than in its natural soil; so does the inward man no where more happily and sooner grow up to perfection, than in the most inward ground of the soul, where Christ resides.

§ 9. The mind, or conscience of man, is possessed either with joy or sorrow: this, if it is kept intent upon things eternal and divine, will in its turn refresh you with an inward delight; but if with external and worldly things you pollute it, you will reap inward torment and abundant sorrow.

§ 10. As often as the soul is in pain, because of its iniquities, so often does it secretly bewail itself. In this fountain of tears, it night after night cleanses and washes itself by the spirit and by faith, through the name of Jesus; that it may become holy, and fitter to enter into the inward sanctuary, and holy of holies, and there hold secret discourse with its Lord.

§ 11. And because the Lord is "a God that hideth himself," let the soul approach him in a manner more secret and remote from the noise of the world, that she may the more readily participate of his divine communications; and being hidden with him, let her, according to the psalmist, say, (audiam quid loquatur *in me* dominus) "I will hear what God the Lord will in me speak; and, I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. Also, this poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. And unto thee will I pray: my voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up." Thus the further our souls retire from the world, the more familiar they become to God: even as the patriarch Jacob, when separated from his children and kinsfolk, conversed with God and angels. For it cannot be expressed

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in words, how much a holy soul, that is sequestered from the friendship and fellowship of the world, is loved by God and his angels; seeing they continually delight in the company of such an one.

CHAP. XXIV.

Of the Love of God and our Neighbour.

1 TIM. i. 5.—*Now the end of the commandment is charity; out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.*

IN this assertion, the apostle sets before us the highest and noblest virtue, viz. love, and certifies us, concerning it, these four things.

I. The first is, that love is the end and summary of all the commandments, and the fulfilling of the law: Is that wherein are comprehended and fulfilled, all the precepts of God, both under the first and the second covenant; and without which, all gifts and virtues are fruitless and unprofitable.

II. The second thing by him asserted, is that true love comes ever out of a clean heart: or, the *purity of the heart*, is a spring of heavenly charity; which comprehends in it love towards God, which proceeds out of a pure heart, that is cleansed from the love of the world. Wherefore St. John warns us "not to love the world, neither the things that are in the world," under which he specifies the *lust of the flesh*, with the *lust of the eyes*, and the *pride of life;* because the mixture of any of these is absolutely inconsistent with the pure love of God which has no fellowship with the world, or with whatever is of the world. For, "if any man, (saith he) love the world, the love of the Father is not in him;" these two kinds of love being as incompatible as light and darkness. And again he tells us, that all that is in the world, "Is not of the Father, but is of the world;" and that "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof," that is, love out of an impure heart; but that he that

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loves God, from a heart that is pure and doth his will, shall thereby abide forever, even as God himself, the object of his love, abideth forever. Now whosoever has a heart which is thus purified from all creature love, clearly discerns how vain and mad a thing it is to set the heart upon that which passes away, and cannot be retained; or fondly to grasp after perishing shadows, and hold by that which has no durable or abiding substance: And he can find hence no rest for his soul, either in heaven, or in earth, but in God alone. Whence the prophet David, out of this pure heart, is made to cry out, "Lord, whom have I in heaven, but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of thee." And therefore, his flesh also and his heart failed him, when he considered how purely God would be loved, and how there was no rest or satisfaction to be hoped for, in any creature whatsoever; and, having bid adieu to all the creatures, he was now constrained to cry out, "God is the rock of my heart, and my portion forever." This, this is the love which flows out of a pure heart. And this love it was that made him trust so firmly in God, as the whole world was not able to move him; for he was founded upon a rock. And therefore in another psalm, the exulting pleasure and joy which proceeded in him from such a pure love, is most powerfully described by him in this manner. "I heartily love thee, O Lord, even with all my strength do I love thee, the Lord my strength, the Lord my rock, the Lord my fortress, my bulwark and my defence, my castle and strong-hold; my God in whom I trust, my might and my Saviour, my shield, and the horn of my salvation; my refuge, and my high tower." Such as this was his pure trust in God, begotten by pure love, springing up out of a clean heart, that was stripped of all creature dependence, and could find no manner of rest but only in God.

III. The apostle in the third place here teaches us, that love must be *out of a good conscience.* Now this properly concerns the love of our neighbour, and instructs us, that man ought to love his neighbour, not for the sake of interest or worldly advantage; which is a

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false love, and out of a bad conscience; but for the sake of God, and of his commandments, and out of a consciousness of our duty, according to the divine order imprinted in the very nature of things; as also out of a true sense both of the natural and positive obligation which we have to each other, by sympathy of kind, and by the will of God. Whence we are convinced, that for the keeping of a good conscience, such as may be void of all offence, it is highly necessary not to afflict one's neighbour wittingly, either by word or by deed, either secretly or openly, either on a civil or a religious account; or from any pretext whatever, to bear envy, wrath, hatred, malice or rancour in one's heart against him; that so one's conscience may not be one's accuser in prayer before God.

IV. The last thing by the apostle here asserted, is this, that love must be *out of faith unfeigned:* By which we are to understand, that true christian love has always its root in the sincerity of our faith; and that whether it respect God or our neighbour, it will certainly keep us from undertaking any thing against the true christian faith, or the principles of our most holy religion; and preserve us from wavering when we are tried. For love unfeigned, which is grounded in, and rises out of such a faith as this, is that which will maintain us unmoveable in every temptation, that we may not deny God with the mouth or by our conversation, secretly or openly, expressly or implicitly, in adversity or prosperity, for fear or for favour, in a court, or in a prison, upon the cross, or under transports of consolation; or for any pretence whatever, or in any manner whatever, make ship-wreck of the faith which has been delivered to us, and which works by love. And this is the sum of what is contained in this short saying of the apostle: Of which we shall now speak more particularly, with respect to each of the several parts.

I.

§ 1. In the first place then, *love*, according to the apostle, "is the end of the commandment:" it is a fulfilling of the whole law; it is a summary of all the precepts of Jesus Christ; it is both the beginning and

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motive, and the end and perfection of every truly virtuous act. By which we are always to understand, that love which is out of a right faith. This love, I say, is the noblest, the best, and the highest work and fruit of faith, which a man can do, and which God is best pleased with. For God requires no great and difficult work from us, no high matters, or what may exceed our capacity, to serve him with: But has changed the heavy yoke of the old Testament service, and the many commandments and ordinances of that dispensation, into faith and love, and has given us for this end also the Holy Ghost, according as we find it written, "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." So here we have the true spring and original of this virtue. Love therefore is not a hard work, or a labour of difficulty; but is that which renders a godly, faithful man light and easy, as if he had no burthen at all. Whence "his commandments are not grievous," saith St. John. His meaning is, that they are not so to an enlightened christian. For the Holy Ghost makes a free, willing, and a ready heart: and he is the inspirer of courage which fails not, but surmounts all difficulties, be they never so great.

§ 2. Neither does God require of us great skill or great ability: It is only love which he will have from us: Nothing but our love does he ask for: provided it be fervent and hearty, without dissimulation or disguise, God is well pleased therewith, and is more delighted therein, than in all the knowledge and wisdom, and in all the skilfulness and mastery that any man upon earth in his best works can ever express. And verily, where love is not, all wisdom, all knowledge, all works, and all gifts, are altogether unprofitable and good for nought: Yea, he is dead, whosoever lives without love. And though you speak with the eloquence even of angels, concerning heavenly and divine matters, yet if you have not love, you are but sounding brass, and your seraphic oratory is but a tinkling cymbal. And though you have the revelation of all futurities in the church, and the understanding of all mysteries, divine and natural, and the interpretation of all languages, dead and living,

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and an universal knowledge of all that either men or angels can know, whether in the heights above, or in the depths beneath, and though you have also therewith a wonder-working faith, so as by it not only to remove mountains, but even the earth itself out of its place, yet if you have not this love of God, all verily will profit you nothing: all shall cease, all shall vanish away, and every thing shall come to an end, but love knows no end. This then is the distinguishing mark and characteristic of a true and unfeigned christian. Great abilities are common to heathens and christians; great works are common to believers and unbelievers; great natural parts, great moral accomplishments, great acquirements of several kinds are alike common to one and to the other; only love is the right test of a right christian, and separates betwixt the false and the good, the counterfeit and the true, the vile and the precious.

§ 3. Without it every work is of no moment; and with it there is nothing but what is accepted of God. It makes all things easy, and is heavy to none. It is far dearer than the arts, and more precious than the wisdom of the whole world. It is the christian's badge, and the seal of the Holy Ghost. The sciences without it are all unprofitable, and all gifts and all works are of no value. Knowledge is indifferent both to the good and to the bad; and learning is common equally as well to christians as to antichristians; and the works of the faithful, and those of the infidels may be in every thing but this alike. It is love alone which is the sure and certain character of a christian. Wherefore it was said of old time, "Oh! how do these christians love one another?" It is love alone which draws us and unites us to God, who is love. For we know that *God is love*, if we know any thing at all of him: And further, that *he that dwelleth*, or abideth *in love*, *dwelleth* and abideth *in God, and God in him.* Whereupon it follows, that where love is not, God is not there; and that he that abides not in love, has no portion in God, in Christ, or in heaven, which is the kingdom of love. So then where love is wanting, there is no good: And where that is present, there no evil can abide; forasmuch as

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God himself is there present to the soul. Love is pleasant and acceptable with God; because it is of his own nature: And so is every man that exercises it, and brings forth the fruit thereof. There is no work without it, but is a dead work: And there can be no work with it, but it is a living one. For in this love which is from above, there is an endless spring of life; and heavenly charity is the communication of the divine life itself, and an essential ray of infinite goodness.

§ 4. And whereas all the arts and sciences, and all the knowledge and wisdom, which man grasps after, are not gotten but with great labour and study, with much care and solicitude, and with the loss of their strength; this heaven born love cheers both the body and the mind, invigorates the spirits, adds vegetation, makes the flower of life to bud, and meliorates and exalts the soul. Neither is it loss to any, but rather brings forth most ample fruit: For love is the reward of the lover; and virtue is a reward to itself. But where love is banished, there corroding envy, with devouring malice, and all the other furies, come to take their abode: And in like manner as virtue, born of love, crowns itself with benefits; even so vice, on the contrary, being so opposite to this divine birth of love, punishes and torments itself, and is its own executioner: while love arises stronger and stronger, exults under all difficulties, finds even in the hardest trials, a most sweet refreshment, and in the very lion's belly discovers honey and the honeycomb. And when the other faculties of the body and mind are weakened and tired, are all faint and wearied; love faints not, love is never weary, nor ever ceases: Prophecy may pass away, and tongues may cease, and sciences may be destroyed, and arts may be lost, and the knowledge of mysteries may vanish away, yea, and faith itself may also fail; but this *never faileth*, neither can it fail; for when all that is imperfect is done away, this abides forevermore: Because love is born of God; and therefore is accepted of him, and is continually before him. For what God will accept, must necessarily come from God; since he approves nothing but that which he himself first works in us. And seeing then

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that God, even our God, is love; therefore all, whatever we do, ought to proceed from love, and to move from a faith of divine operation, out of a love most pure and single, that we may be profitable and serviceable to our neighbours, for God's sake; without any petty prospect of our own interest and gain therein. And so should our prayers arise in like manner from love.

§ 5. This should be the spring of them all: and without we have this, all is but lip-service. He that loves God, prays well, and praises well: but he that loves not God, neither prays nor praises as he ought; because he neither prays to him, nor praises him from the heart. What manner of prayer or praises can a heart pour out to God, which is full of wrath and rancour, hatred and malice? Verily, should such a one recite the whole psalter over every day, with all the prayers and hymns which are found in the whole scripture, all this would be but a mere abomination before God. True prayer consists in spirit, in faith, in love: it consists not in words. Think upon Christ, how he prayed: think, if you can, with what a tender merciful heart he cried, *Father, forgive them*, Luke xxiii. 34. He that loves not God, prays not: but he that heartily loves God, knows how to pray; and for him to pray, is both easy and comfortable. In his heart is the prayer of peace, and from his lips goes forth a burning stream of charity, as having been touched with a coal from the heavenly altar. His inward eye is fixed continually upon God, and unto him he sends up a pure and living sacrifice from a fire within him which is never quenched. Consequently, he prefers nothing before God, and esteems nothing so sweet as communion with him, or so refreshing as the worship of him, which is performed in truth, by the spirit of holy love. If any man love God, he will worship him from the heart, and his service will be most pleasant and delightful: but if any man love not God, he worships not God; yea, though he heaps mountains upon mountains, yet he serves not God: and if he says that he does, he is a liar. So then nothing can ever befal a person better, or more

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profitable, than that this love of God should wax warm in his heart, and that the fire thereof be kept from going out.

§ 6. Faith should do all things in a christian through love; and all the things that are done in him, ought thus to be wrought by faith united with love; even as the soul works through the body. As the soul sees, hears, tastes, smells, and speaks through the body, and does all things in and through the body to which it is united: So in like manner should the love of God, as the soul of your soul, do all things in and through you. Whether you eat or drink, whether you hear or speak, whether you commend or reprove any one, let all be done in love, and after the example of our Lord Christ, in whom the most pure and perfect love wrought all things. Wherefore if you behold your neighbour, behold him with the eyes of sincere charity; if you hear him, hear him with all love and tenderness; and if you speak with him, let your speech be made savoury to him, with the meekness of wisdom, and the merciful bowels of christian affection.

§ 7. Preserve the root of love always in you by faith, that nothing but what is good may grow up, and proceed forth in you, as from this divine root. For so shall you be assisted to fulfil the commandments of God; seeing that they are all comprehended in love. Wherefore a certain holy doctor spake after this manner: "O love of God in the Holy Ghost! which is the ravishing sweetness of souls, and the divine life of men, whosoever hath not thee is dead even while he liveth; and whosoever hath thee, never dieth before God. Where thou art not, there the life of man is nought but a restless dying: where thou art, there man's life is made a foretaste of eternal life." Thus it appears, that charity, or divine love, is the end, sum, and completion of the commandments. Wherefore we proceed now to shew, whence and where it may be expected to spring up.

II.

§ 8. The love of man to God must be "out of a pure heart." The heart of man hence, that desires to love God, should in the first place be cleansed from all world-

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ly love, and creature affection; so shall God be to him the chief and the highest good: and he shall be able to say, "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot." For he considers, that "the Lord knoweth the days of the upright," being those that love him out of a pure and disinterested heart; and that their inheritance, or their good, shall be forever, because their steps are established by him, and he delighteth in their way. Wherefore it is said likewise by the Holy Ghost, "delight thyself also in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart." In God shall man only find the desire and joy of his heart.

§ 9. God therefore should be the most beloved of our souls, and our hearts should rest in him, and wait patiently for him; because he is our highest and best Good, the Good of all goods: Forasmuch as he is all goodness, and all virtue: even virtue itself; and all that is or can be called good, in the truest and most super-eminent sense. So that God is the only Good, and there is none besides him: He is purely and merely good, purely and merely love. And if it be asked what God is? we may well answer, that God is mere grace, love, friendship, clemency, fidelity, truth, consolation, peace, joy, life and salvation. Now all these has he laid up in Christ: and whosoever has Christ, the same has all these. And if any man has the love of God, he has also the truth of God, with his mercy, his goodness, and the whole body of the virtues; for seeing that he loves God, thereby loves he not one only, but all the virtues, even as they are in God.

§ 10. So the right lover of God loves all that God loves; and has an aversion to all that God has an aversion to. He likes and dislikes all things, even as God likes and dislikes them. Hence if any man love God, he must love also righteousness, seeing that God is righteousness itself. And therefore should he have a love for the truth, seeing that God is truth, very truth itself. Moreover, this being so, man ought to love and delight in mercy; seeing that God is mercy, yea, very mercy itself. Also a man ought for the same reason to have

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a love for, and delight in, meekness and humility; seeing that hereby there is a conformity to the meek and humble will of Christ. And on the contrary, God's true lover cannot but hate all ungodliness, and have an abhorrence for all the works of unrighteousness. For that which is unrighteous, is hated of him, because it is against God, and is the enemy of God and the work of the devil. Therefore the lover of God hates a lie; forasmuch as the devil is the father of lies, and a liar from the beginning. Moreover, he must needs hate unmercifulness, impatience, pride, blasphemy, and other sins; because they are part of the devil. And whosoever loves sin, as for instance, a lie and injustice, this man is a son of the devil; according as it is written, *he that committeth sin*, that is, with an affection for it, *is of the devil*, or one of his cursed progeny; and according to the words of our blessed Lord, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the works of your father ye will do." The reason whereof is thus given: "He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him." So every one that loves and makes a lie, or pursues in his heart any other wickedness, is of his father the devil, and does the works of his father, because he has part of his father in him, "who sinned from the beginning." And he that loves and does righteousness, is of his father, the most righteous God, and is righteous even as God his father is righteous; and consequently the works of his father he will do. And if any man love our Lord Jesus Christ, and respect him as his Redeemer and Saviour, he also cannot but love the example of his most holy life, particularly his meekness, his lowliness, and his patience; he cannot but wish and endeavour to transcribe and imitate these, with all other virtues, graces, and beauties which he loves in him; because his image is engraven deep upon his heart, and he is made by love a son of God.

§ 11. But you must remember that you pray to God for this love, which is *out of a pure heart*, who, through the love of Christ, will most freely and readily enkindle the flames thereof in your heart, whereby you shall receive

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a name among the sons of God; if you pray to him for it, and cease not to importune him, by the offering up to him from your heart every day, yea, every hour, and every moment, in a constant habitual resignation of your will, to be disposed of by him. And if it happen, that your love wax cold and weak at any time, rouse up your heart, faint not, but stir up the gift of divine grace within you, and never be hereby discouraged: And should you, through the weakness of your love, sometimes fail, yea, not only fail, but also fall too; get up in the name of God, rise again and go to work, and renew the acts of your love. For in as much as you are sensible of this your coldness and weakness, be assured that the eternal light of divine love is not extinguished, though it be a little eclipsed; and therefore never doubt, but that God, your most gracious and tender Saviour, will enlighten you again, and fire your heart with his love, as in the days of his first espousals to you; so that you may sit again under his shadow, and rejoice in the light of his countenance. Yet however it may be with you, you must be sure to abide humble; and whenever he shall visit you again with his gracious consolation, and shall inflame your heart with his love, you should pray to his holy Majesty incessantly, that he may never at any time hereafter suffer the bright flame of divine love in you to be quenched. Thus much of love *out of a pure heart*, which is purified from the love of the world and of the creatures.

III.

§ 12. The love of man to his neighbour must be *out of a good conscience*. The love of God and of our neighbour, is one, and they cannot be separated. True divine love cannot be better manifested and proved, than by loving our neighbour. Hence then, "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother (or neighbour) whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God, love his neighbour also." Which is, "A new commandment (saith our Lord) give I unto you,

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that ye love one another, as I have loved you." He that loves God, will love his brother also, who was made after the image of God. For the love of God cannot dwell with one that is a man hater; nor abide in a heart that is leavened with hatred and uncharitableness. And if you have no pity on your brother, whom you know to stand in need of your help, how can you love God, who needs not any thing that is yours, and has commanded you to express your love towards him, by the marks thereof to your brother?

§ 13. 1. Faith unites to God, love unites to our neighbour. And even as a man is made up of body and soul, so do faith and love: that is, the love both of God and of our neighbour, make up a true christian. Thus he that dwells in love, dwells in God. And seeing that God takes no delight in the death or evil of any, it follows, that he that loves in like manner, is of one heart and mind with God; and he that does not so, is against God, and has not the mind of God at all in him, but is God's enemy while he is his neighbour's. He doubtless is an adversary to God, that is an enemy to mankind.

§ 14. 2. Furthermore, it is the property of this love to bewail and compassionate the infirmities of others; forasmuch as they represent to us, as in a glass, our own proper defects, and bring to our memory the most infirm condition of our humanity. Wherefore when you see another overtaken in a fault, consider that you also yourself are but a man; and endeavour, if possible, to restore this your neighbour in the spirit of meekness. For inasmuch as you bear his infirmity and his burden, you by so doing *fulfil the law of Christ*, which is the perfect law of love; whereby we are obliged to receive one another, and to bear one with another, as Christ also received us, and bore with us, to the glory of God; in all patience, humility and gentleness, with brotherly kindness, as considering ourselves, lest we also should be tempted.

§ 15. 3. And such especially as sin, not out of malicious wickedness, but merely through weakness of nature and inadvertence, and return again to them-

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selves, and acknowledge their fault, and both rebuke and punish themselves for it, purposing never to do so more; these verily are to be pitied, condoled, and assisted. These you must receive with all tenderness and meekness, even as your gracious Saviour has received you; that with one heart you may glorify God together, who is the Father of all mercies and consolations in Jesus Christ. He that does otherwise, shews that he has nothing in him of the merciful and forbearing Spirit of Christ, whom he professes to call Lord. For when a man is hastily for punishing the faults of his neighbour, without mitigation or compassion, and judges him without commiserating his case, it is an evident token, that such an one wants the merciful love of God, and is void of the Holy Ghost, and has not God with him. And on the contrary, a christian, being one that is anointed with the Spirit of Christ, is for treating all men as one that has a fellow-feeling with them, is for bearing with them in sympathising mercy, and for aiding them to the utmost of his power, in merciful love; according as was the manner of Christ, and as he has set an example for us to follow, whence it may be known that we are his true disciples. For this is the touchstone whereby every one is to be tried, whether he be of God or not, whether he be a true or a counterfeit christian. Now, if any man finds that he has not the love of his neighbour abiding in him, let him know for certain, and be fully assured in his own mind, that he has not the love of God remaining in him; because it is not possible to sever one of these from the other. Yea, let him fear therefore that God himself has forsaken him, and that he is without God; because it appears that he is without his love. Are you then afraid, that you are without the love of God, and consequently without God; considering that this love does not rightly manifest itself in the fruits thereof towards your neighbour? You do well to be afraid, and to be sorry from your heart: Repent of your misdoings; heap for the future, all proper obligations of love upon your neighbour; if you have offended him, make haste to be reconciled with him, and leave nothing undone on your part, to return into his

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favour. Which being faithfully done by you, God will espouse himself to you in love. And whatsoever after this you shall do in faith and charity, is, and shall be accounted unto you, good, holy and divine. Moreover, by reason of the inherent love of God in you, you will be made ready to embrace every one in love and mercy, with joy: neither can any thing be more acceptable and delightful than for you to do good or to be exercised in the acts of beneficence, through that love of God, which now dwells in you: For even as it is with God whom you love, who says of himself by the prophet, "I will rejoice over them to do them good:" So it must likewise, and so it will be with you, if he dwells in you, and you in him, through love. But,

§ 16. 4. Without love, all is diabolical that is in man; without it all is fundamentally evil. Neither is there indeed any other cause why the devil can do no good, but because he is utterly destitute of love, both towards God and towards his neighbour; and hereupon all that he does, is fundamentally evil, and evil altogether. Whence he seeks and designs in all whatsoever he sets about, to do nothing else but God's dishonour, and man's destruction; and that he may be able to bring his enmity to effect both against God and man. And therefore he seeks out such envious and malicious hearts, through which he may work out his malice and wrath. And hereby it is manifested who are God's children, and who are the devil's. See 1 John iii. 10.

IV.

§ 17. Love must be *out of faith unfeigned;* and being so, it puts no difference, for the sake of God, between what is bitter and sweet, painful and joyous, for the present; but loves them and embraces them alike. It rejoices in adversity, even as in prosperity, and faints not when it is tried. The man that heartily loves God, is well pleased with every thing wherewith God is well pleased. And he that has a love for God, cannot but also have a love for his cross, which he has given him to bear. Let us then look to Christ our Lord, and behold how willing he was to take his cross upon him,

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because it was God's will he should. For "I have a baptism, (saith he) to be baptized with: And, oh! how am I straitened (and in pain) till it be accomplished." In like manner have all the holy martyrs carried after him their cross with joy. For to them that unfeignedly love God, out of a sincere faith, it is not hard to bear their cross, forasmuch as their cross is Christ's yoke. The loadstone draws to it heavy iron: And shall not the heavenly loadstone, the love of God, draw that also which is heavy to it? Shall it not lift up after it the burden of our cross, as if it were most light and easy, if our hearts by love are lifted up to God? And if sugar can make that sweet which is not so in its own nature, shall not the sweetness of divine love make the cross sweet, let it be in its own nature never so bitter to the flesh? From hence is derived the high patience, and exceeding joy of the blessed martyrs; in that God gave them plentifully to drink of the fulness of his love, whereby they were transported out of and beyond themselves.

CHAP. XXV.

Of Love towards our Neighbour.

2 PET. ii. 19.—*Of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.*

§ 1. AMONGST all kinds of bondage, there is none more hard than to be under the bondage of the passions: but of all these, none is so cruel as *hatred*. He that is overcome by this passion, is under the most deplorable bondage that can ever be conceived: and he that hates his brother, let him be never so great or rich in appearance, is the worst and vilest of slaves. Nothing is more noble or free than love, whether it respect God or our neighbour: nothing is more ignoble, or base, than the contrary affection. Hatred suffers nothing, is kind to none, yea, not to itself; it envies every one, and is puffed up with pride and arrogance; it be-

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hereby, how we ought to carry always the same mind towards our neighbour, without respect to any man's person. Wherefore he that would know what respect or favour he is in with God, need not go far to inquire: It is sufficient for him to ask his own conscience; for that will tell him presently, just according as his mind is towards his neighbour. And so hereby he may be able at all times to gather how God stands affected towards him, and in what state he is. For like as we have done to our neighbour, even so it is meet that God should do to us also, and mete unto us, as we shall have meted unto others. Let us not therefore fail to do to our neighbour, as we would that God would do to us. For "with the merciful man God will shew himself merciful: and with an upright man, he will shew himself upright." But with him that is unmerciful and perverse, God will in like manner shew himself even as he in his heart is affected towards his brother, and fellow-servant: This David had experience of, when he said in spirit, "with the pure, thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward, thou wilt shew thyself froward; for thou wilt save the afflicted (and humble) people, but wilt bring down the high looks." All things therefore whatsoever we would that God should do for us, let us be ready always to do even so for them, as far as is in our power, who were created after his image. And never let us forget, that with what judgment we judge our neighbour, we shall also be judged of God: And with what treatment we treat him, we ourselves shall surely be treated by the Just One, in the day of his accounts. Nothing is more certain than this. On this depend the law and the prophets, as eternal truth has told us. And in this sense we come to understand, how God is good to the good; but a consuming fire to all them that have enkindled the hellish fire within their breast. According to the disposition of your own heart, even so will you find God to be to you: He melts the wax, but he hardens the clay; he humbles himself to the humble, and has compassion on the compassionate; but the proud he tramples on, and is averse to the averse. Wherefore he that loves not his brother, loves not his own soul;

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neither does he deserve to have God his friend, that is an enemy to his neighbour.

§ 4. Now seeing that God has no need of our works, as our neighbour has, it appears that charity towards our neighbour is given us in charge, that it might be to us as a loadstone, whereby to attract us to God, and as a most certain evidence of the divine charity which is in us, or of our love towards God. For if these things were otherwise, God would not have so directed the act of love to our neighbour, as to a certain scope and end, nor have bound us to this, as to a law, but that we might know his love to us thereby, that is, as we should ourselves prove the same mind every hour and moment, to be and act in us toward our neighbour; and so approve ourselves the children of our Father which is in heaven, who makes his sun to rise alike on all, and sends his rain on all without exception.

§ 5. Wherefore though Christ Jesus his Son, by his death, once sufficiently made satisfaction for the sins of the whole world, and for all men therein; for which all men accordingly ought to give thanks; yet no man can warrant this to himself, who is not first reconciled to his neighbour. For all mankind, under the person of the wicked servant in the parable, are described; who when he had not wherewith to pay, the King freely remitted him all his debts; but when he afterwards behaved himself so cruelly towards his fellow-servant, the King revoked this his pardon, condemning the said wicked servant, by reason of his hard usage of his neighbour. Which parable Christ concludes with this notable farewell: "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also to you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." Moreover,

§ 6. Like unto that, is this other saying of our Lord: "What measure ye mete unto others, the same shall be meted unto you." Whereby it appears, that man was not created for himself alone; but for his neighbour also. Since so strong is the commandment of loving our neighbour, that whenever it is broken, the very end of our creation is thereby broken in upon and violated; and God thereupon draws back his love from

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haves itself most unseemly; it seeks its own most preposterously; it is most easily provoked to its own (as well as others') hurt; it thinks evil of all, and will be sure to give to all the wrong bias; hatred rejoices not in the truth, but rejoices in iniquity, and in lies; hatred bears with nothing, and nothing bears with it; it will endure nothing, it will believe nothing, it will hope for nothing that may serve to render a man easy. Verily, there is no tyranny like to this, no servitude to be compared with the subjection to this most hateful passion. It will fail every one that trusts to it: and whosoever is overcome by it, however he may promise himself liberty, has nothing but bonds and fetters to boast of, and is a servant of corruption to the very meanest degree; even so far as to sink beneath human nature, and to be only fit to be chained up with wild beasts. For it captivates the understanding, drags the will, harasses the memory, scourges the conscience, and stigmatizes the inward man with the mark of the wicked one. And whosoever bears this mark, and abides in uncharitableness, the same is undoubtedly a most vile bond-slave, and his condition of servitude more wretched, and more inhuman, than that of those who are condemned either to the mines or to the gallies. Nothing can exceed the evil, the hardship, the inhumanity hereof; for it is the root of all the evil, the hardships, and the inhumanities, which are exercised by men one upon the other. And besides, it fatigues, frets, and binds all the powers and forces both of body and soul, wherever it domineers in any; and so leaves a man not so much as the least thought free. But he that exercises love towards his neighbour, and that remains in charity, the same is free in mind; since he is not the captive of hatred, nor the servant of wrath, envy, pride, lying, and slandering, which are confederated with it for mischief, and tyrannize cruelly over poor slavish minds, which are brought into bondage by them. Whereas none of them but flee from generous minds, and can by no means abide with humble and loving souls. From all which he therefore being set free by charity, out of a generous and pure heart, suffers not himself to be brought again into the

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slavery of these, but remains a freeman of Jesus Christ, through the spirit of liberty. For "where the spirit is, there is liberty." Whosoever then walks in the love of Christ, the same is no longer a slave of sin, or a bond-servant to carnal affection. For he by the spirit of the love of God, and by a life of divine charity, is set free; being purified thereby both from the love and hatred which are after the flesh. Thus is he made the Lord's freeman; because this love of God abides now in him, which is the highest liberty.

§ 2. Now we see that the love of God is stretched forth over all men; which not only in his word, but in all nature also, he bears testimony to. We are all equally covered with the heavens, and have all the use of the sun, the air, the earth, and the water; both they of high and they of low degree alike. And the very same mind that is in God towards all mankind, ought likewise to be in us: And so ought our mind to be affected towards our neighbour, as he has set us himself an example. Concerning which universality of the divine charity, you are not to say, it has happened merely because God would have it so; but that by his example, he might teach, and manifest that he regards not one more than another, but loves all with equal affection. Forasmuch as with him there is neither respect of persons, nor prerogative of dignity nor merit; but in Christ all are one, there is none better than another. He has loved us all in Christ, with the very same love: and he beholds no worth, or excellence, or beauty in any: but beholds every one alike in Christ. Which is for our instruction, that as he shews himself towards us, such ought we likewise to be, and to carry ourselves towards our neighbour; because after the same manner as we shall deal with them, God will also infallibly deal with us. For this is the law that he has given to every one, and whereby we shall be tried, our own consciences acquitting or condemning us.

§ 3. Which law God wrote in our hearts, that he might convince us, with what mind he was himself affected towards us: and then, lest we should be mistaken and overtaken unawares, to teach and admonish us

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us. For as man withdraws his love from his brother, so God in like manner withdraws his love from that man, and according to the same measure. Give therefore, and it shall be given unto you: forgive, and it shall be forgiven unto you: yea, be sure to give good measure, *pressed down and shaken together:* and learn to forgive, not only seven times a day, but *seventy times seven*, when your brother trespasses against you. See that you do not with your wrath provoke the love of God, and so oblige him to proceed with his justice; by whose most just decree the uncharitable servant is thereupon immediately condemned. Let this be well reflected upon. And if we should call such things to mind, as are contained in this parable of our blessed Lord, I dare say, we should never be long angry with our neighbour; neither should the sun go down upon our wrath. For it is in truth a most horrible thing, that the precious merit of Christ, whereby he satisfied for the whole world fully, and wherewith (after the example of that King) of his mere grace, he remitted all our sins; I say, that this his merit should become of no effect to us, if we do not pardon our brother, as we expect pardon from God; and we be entirely cut off from all benefit by it.

§ 7. Although this law may seem hard: yet so it is written; and it so binds, as God, without the love of our neighbour, will not accept to be loved by us. And if we become irreconcileable, God also will be irreconcileable to us. Neither are we to think, it was for other reason that man was not created one of a better mould than the other; but that one should not insult over another; so that as twins of one mother and one father, we should all live lovingly and peaceably together. For as we are all descended from one Father in heaven, even God; and from one father on earth, made after his image, even Adam; and as all of us have one and the same mother, the earth, from whose womb we were produced, and to which all return again, that they may be born thence a second time, when the appointed measure shall be fulfilled: even so ought we in all brotherly

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love, to abound each one to another, and "to owe no man any thing, but to love one another." And,

§ 8. If any man hate and despise his brother, him God does also hate and despise; because as he has *fulfilled his law*, who loves his neighbour; so he that hates another, has broken the *whole law*. For which reason he well deserves the hatred and contempt of God, who in his word most severely has forbidden it: And consequently the uncharitable person is hateful and abominable to God, is deserving of eternal condemnation, and is altogether excluded from the merits of Christ Jesus. Neither can it by any means come to pass, that a heart that is at enmity, without mercy, and without humanity, should participate of the blood of Christ, which was shed out of mere love: seeing that out of the parable aforesaid, it is manifest, that God was less offended at the debt of ten thousand talents, than at the unmercifulness and cruelty of the fellow-servant. Wherefore let us then never forget, but daily remember that saying of our Lord: "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you."

CHAP. XXVI.

Wherefore our Neighbour is to be loved.

ROM. xiii. 18.—*Owe nothing to any man, but to love one another. For he that loveth his neighbour, fulfilleth the law.*

§ 1. HEAR the words of the prophet Micah, instructing us by way of question and answer: "What good things shall I offer unto the Lord? shall I offer unto him burnt offerings with calves of a year old? can the Lord be pleased in thousands of rams, or in many thousands of fat he-goats, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first born for my transgression, and the fruit of my body for the sins of my soul? (Answer) I will shew thee, O man, what is good, and what the Lord requireth of thee: Even to do judgment, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy

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God." By which judgment or justice, the prophet teaches us wherein the true worship of God properly consists; not in ceremonies and sacrifices, which are able to confer nothing on God, because all is his own; nor in human offerings, which he requires not, but rather abhors, because they contain the reproach of Jesus Christ, the great propitiatory oblation which God appointed to take away the sins of the world; but in pure faith, which from the visible effect of it, the prophet here describes in this form, *To do judgment*, that is, by the exercise of faith in righteousness, in charity, in mercy, (which is better pleasing than all sacrifices) and in humility, contrition, and self-abnegation, according to what is written, "The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; a humble and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."

§ 2. To which divine worship and service, consisting in the inward centre of the heart, and exerting itself in faith, charity, and humility, St. Paul powerfully exhorts us in his epistle to the Romans, whose admonition we have here prefixed, which contains in it both the praise of charity, and the perpetual debt to our neighbour; without which it is impossible to serve God aright. It is fit therefore, and right, "to owe no man any thing, but to love one another," always remembering, that "love worketh no ill (as he saith) to his neighbour:" And that "therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." For certainly there is no other way but this of serving God, to whom we can approve ourselves by nothing but by what we in our own consciences allow, and he himself works in our hearts: So that to serve God, is nothing but to serve our neighbour, and to do him all the good and kindness that we are able. To this love of our neighbour, the apostle inciting us, uses an argument that is most plausible and powerful to those who are desirous to lead a christian life: He calls it a breviary of all the virtues, and a *fulfilling* of the law: Not that we are able possibly, by any acts of charity, to fulfil the divine law, or that we can gain eternal life thereby; but it insinuates to us, the noble bounty and majesty of this most excellent virtue, and inflames us to love it with all our

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desire, as it descends from God: For both our righteousness and happiness are purely and solely founded on the merit of Jesus Christ; which merit we apply to ourselves by faith, and out of which faith, the love toward our neighbour flows, and with it all other virtues; which virtues therefore are rightly called the fruits of righteousness, or justice, to the praise and glory of God, who works them in the soul. For they are the offspring of that pure love, which is begotten in the heart by faith, and fructifies from the centre of a divine seed that is sown in it by the great Seeds-man; who went forth to sow in the ground of human nature. From this central seed of holy love, as the same is by faith received and cherished in the soul, do all the christian graces and virtues spring up, to the glory of the Divine Sower. Thus is justice re-established, the law fulfilled, God honoured. Seeing then the dignity of this virtue is so exceeding great, it may be worth much labour to seek more arguments and motives to draw us to the love and pursuit of it.

§ 3. The first and strongest of all, in my opinion, is that which St. John uses, "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God and God in him:" For who would not wish to be in God, and remain in him, and that God in like manner shall be and remain in him? and who, on the contrary, would not abhor to be in satan, and to have satan dwelling in him; which is as often as charity is repulsed, and as barbarity and hostility are thereupon admitted to dwell in our hearts. For as it is the delight of God to be with the sons of men, and to save them from death and destruction; so contrariwise, the devil is a devourer of men; and he that dwells in hatred, dwells in the devil, and the devil in him. Whosoever therefore abides in love, need not fear the devil, or any evil; because God abides in him.

§ 4. To which belongs that also of St. John, "He that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." Whence he that loves not, is born of the devil, and knows (or is well acquainted with) the devil. So in this is made manifest whether they be the sons of God,

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or of the devil. And can there be any thing more desirable than to be the sons of God, to be begotten of God, and to know God truly and experimentally? But whosoever has his heart void of charity, and has not by experience known the force of it, or its life, nor tasted its gifts, or its goodness, gentleness, long-suffering, and patience, this man does not know God, who is charity. For the knowledge of God and Christ is known by experience, and by a real feeling and seeing that Christ is mere love and perfect meekness. Whence it follows, that he that is without charity, is without Christ, according to that of St. Peter, who told his converts, That if they had charity, this would not leave them empty, nor without fruit, in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ: "For if these things (saith he) be in you, and abound, they make you that you shall be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ," 2 Pet. i. 8. So that in this, as was afore said, "the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil."

§ 5. And Christ himself says, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another." Since to be the disciple of Christ, it is not sufficient to be a christian in name, and in outward profession: but it behoves him to be much more, even to believe in Christ, to love him, to follow him, to live in him; to take counsel with Christ, to listen to Christ, and Christ alone; to feel himself inwardly loved of him, and to participate with him in all his goodness, and in the fulness of his grace and love. Which love of Christ whosoever has not abiding in him, this man verily is not of Christ: for how should Christ know him who is destitute of Christ? For even as an apple by its savour, and a flower by its smell is known; so a christian, or a true disciple of Jesus Christ, is known by his love.

§ 5. Boldly therefore, and without the least doubt, or hesitation, the blessed apostle St. Paul affirms, saying, *all gifts without charity are nothing:* Which is also another ground, or motive, for our desire of, and pursuit after, this excellent gift. And in truth, neither the knowledge of divers tongues, nor miracles, nor the understanding of high mysteries, nor any such like spirit-

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ual good things, demonstrate a good christian, as has been shewn; but faith only which works by charity. Without it all is nothing. Moreover, God commands not hard things, as to work miracles, but to exercise charity and humility: neither in the day of judgment shall it be demanded of you, how you have been versed in the arts, tongues, and sciences, or what great spiritual gifts you have been possessed of; but whether you have pursued charity through faith? "I have been hungry, (saith our Saviour) and thou gavest me to eat," &c. Mark his words. And blessed Paul writing to the Galatians, also witnesses, that "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith, which worketh by love."

§ 6. Furthermore the words of St. John are by no means to be forgotten, which roundly tells us, "If a man say, he loveth God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that doth not love his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we of God, that he who loveth God, love his brother also." And this one thing they all unanimously teach, that the charity and love which is towards God, cannot consist without the love of, and charity towards our neighbour also. For he that loves not his neighbour, is an enemy to God; for he that is man's enemy, is also God's enemy; seeing that God is the lover of man. Moreover,

§ 7. Love is the first and the great law of nature, from which flow all good things to mankind; and without it mankind would perish of necessity. When any good thing happens to man, it proceeds from love. Whereupon St. Paul calls charity, or universal love, the *bond of perfection;* that is, when it is without all dissimulation: and does also in another place declare in excellent words, and in a most magnificent oration, the noble fruits thereof. And our Saviour himself likewise teaches to the same effect. "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye the same unto them: For this is the law and the prophets." And this the very heathens, not having the law, were taught by nature: whose famous adage, or sentence, is out of

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the said law of nature written in their hearts, from their school, viz. *That which you would not should be done to yourself, do not the same to another.* Which most excellent admonition, the emperor Severus, a prince most praise-worthy, daily had in his mouth, and caused it to be inserted into his written laws. But besides,

§ 8. Love is also a beautiful image, and lovely foretaste of eternal life; wherein the saints mutually love each other sincerely, receive singular delight one from another, and converse together in a wonderful and ineffable concord, and inexpressible sweetness, affection, cheerfulness, mildness, and courtesy. Whoso therefore desires to have, as it were, a certain antepast, or fore-supper of the eternal beatitude, let him study love, wherewith he shall be delighted with singular pleasure and affection in the most inward ground of his soul. For,

§ 9. The more pure, fervent, and fruitful your charity is, so much the nearer it approaches the divine nature; because in God, in Christ, and in the holy Ghost, charity is most pure, most fervent, most fruitful, and most noble. Therefore that love will be pure when we love not for private profit, but only for the cause of God alone; who we know in like manner loved us, and took delight in us most pure, for no good of his own, but for ours. And if any man do not so, but love his neighbour for his own particular profit, his love is not pure and divine; wherein also consists the difference between heathen and christian charity. Hence they that work all their virtues, seeking after their own private gain and honour, do as it were cast ink upon ivory; they blot their best deeds, and deface that which is most excellent, being rightly done; but the christian loves his neighbour, God and Christ, gratis and generously, without any ignoble or selfish ends; and thus is his love preserved pure and sincere, which is true love. And love is true and unfeigned, when there is no hypocrisy nor dissimulation in it: for love is born in the heart, not in the lips and tongue, whereby so many, alas! are deceived. And this love as it is pure, so it is also most fruitful; for nothing is more fruitful than love;

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seeing that all seeds are made to fructify by it. Hence is love very fitly called the fruitful mother of all the births both in heaven and earth. And love is then certainly fruitful, when it brings forth by the holy Ghost, all the fruits of righteousness from the heart, which is divinely impregnated with its seminal principle, or source. Lastly, love is fervent, when it vehemently drives on the lover to act vigorously for the good of the beloved; when it is accompanied with abundant mercy and compassion; and when the affairs of our neighbour go as near to our heart as our own, so that we be ready even to "lay down our very life," if need were for him; yea, what is more, to be annihilated too, or excluded at least our heavenly lot, after the example of Moses and Paul, who thus wished to be, as it were, accursed for their brethren, and to let go their own portion in the blessed kingdom, for their sakes. Thus generous and noble is true charity, which is always pure and disinterested. And what can there be in love more noble, than such a disinterestedness as to sacrifice our all?

§ 10. Whereupon it follows, that we ought even to love our enemies, according to our Lord's commandment: "Love your enemies, do good to those that hate you, and pray for them that persecute you, and revile you, that you may (by a love that is so perfectly free from selfishness,) be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for if you love (only) them which love you, (are ye not herein selfish? and therefore) what reward have you, (or shall you have?) do not the publicans the same?" In this therefore consists the excellency, prerogative, nobility, and high dignity of a true christian; namely, to subject nature to this divine principle, to tame one's flesh and blood, and to overcome the world, with the evil that is therein, by goodness. It is moreover the commandment of God in Exodus xxiii. 5, "If thou meetest with thine enemy's ox or ass going astray, bring him home. If thou seest the ass of him that hateth thee, falling under his burden, thou shalt not pass by him, but thou shalt succour him." Now what means this? What care has God about dumb creatures? Blessed Paul, admiring at this, writes, "Hath

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God care of oxen? And doth he not speak this concerning us much more?" And he thence, according to the word of God, gives this in charge, "If thine enemy hunger, give him meat." Which is as much as to say, though he be thine enemy, treat him as thy friend, and endeavour to make him so by all possible means, heaping as it were coals of love upon his head. Wherefore, lest we might think it sufficient not to hurt our neighbour, we are commanded moreover, to do good to him, to support him, relieve him, and cherish him with food and helps convenient for him. Which, if any man contemn and refuse, this man cannot be the child of God, or a member of Christ, because he loves not his neighbour, be he friend or enemy. Whence also,

§ 11. He that exercises not christian charity, separates himself from the spiritual body of Christ, which is the church; forfeits his right to all the privileges of this body, and loses thereby all the merits of Christ, according to that which is written, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." For even as the members do not, when pulled off from the body, participate of the life and bountiful influence of the head and heart, but die, even every member by itself that is so separated: as many as live not in charity, because they separate themselves from their head, Christ, and from his fountain-heart, do not participate of, nor receive his life, his lively motions, and his fulness; but are dead, according to that of St. John, "He that loveth not his brother, abideth in death." Since whatsoever ceases to have union with the principle of life, the same is dead: And whatsoever has no communion with them that live by virtue of this vital principle, has no fellowship with life, but must abide in death. Wherefore he that abides not in christian love towards his brother, is separated thereby from the body of Christ; so that he cannot partake of the privileges thereof, neither is to be accounted as a member of his church.

§ 12. Last of all, we are to owe nothing, but to love one another, because by this love of the brethren, the prayer of a christian ascends to heaven; because by prayer, all good gifts are to be obtained of God, and without prayer, all helps and consolations are looked for

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in vain; and because God Almighty gives ear to no prayers but those that are grounded on faith and charity; according to that saying of Christ: "If two of you upon the earth consent together, whatsoever they shall desire, it shall be granted unto them by my Father which is in heaven." Come then, let there be this consent and agreement amongst us; let us meet together in the name of our Lord, and in the Spirit of his love; let us live together in charity, wherein is peace and union: For where peace is, there is the God of peace; and where he is, in that place has the Lord commanded his blessing and life forevermore.

CHAP. XXVII.

Wherefore our Enemies are to be loved.

MATT. v. 44, 45—*Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to those that hate you, and pray for them that persecute you and revile you: that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven.*

§ 1. THE first cause for which our enemies ought to be loved by us, is, the express *commandment* of God by his Son, (*I say unto you,*) for which he gives no other reason, but "that we may be the sons of our Father in heaven," (that is) of him that loved us when we were yet his enemies. As if he should say, unless you love your enemies, you cannot be the children of the heavenly Father, nor inheritors by consequence of the kingdom of heaven. And he that is not God's son, what father shall he have? Is he from above, or from below? To which commandment therefore of our Lord, since exceedingly few of us are obedient, it is manifest how far we are from bringing forth the fruits of the children of God: for if we were his children, then would we not fail to use charity towards our enemies, that so we might shew ourselves like unto him.

§ 2. Neither would we then longer abide in death, as knowing that "he that loveth not his brother," accord-

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ing to the observation a little before made, "abideth in death:" for he has not in him true life, which life is of Christ, and is spiritual and heavenly, and consists in faith towards God, and in charity towards our neighbour, according to that of the blessed apostle, "We know that we are translated from death to life, because we love the brethren." Whereupon it is manifest, that the fruit and testimony of our life, and quickening in Christ, is brotherly charity: and on the other hand, that the hatred of our neighbour is death. So that whosoever dies in hatred to any one whatever, he abides in death, and thence shall die the second death.

§ 3. Nay, all his good works, if a man hate his neighbour (as his constant attendance at divine worship, and observation of the commandments of God) are in vain, according to that of St. Paul to the Corinthians, "If I give (and distribute) all that I have to feed the poor, and give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." For if any man abide in death, then are all his works no other than dead works: let him do whatever he will, it is all lifeless, and to no purpose, so long as he does it not from a divine principle of life and love abiding in him. Now he that has not charity, and so forgives not his neighbour that may have trespassed against him, but counts him unworthy of remission; thereby shews that as he himself abides in death, so all his works are dead also, and without the least savour of life according to God.

§ 4. Moreover, it is the property and evidence of a noble, great, and god-like mind, to pardon injuries. For let us behold God, both how long-suffering he is, and consider how suddenly he is reconciled. Let us behold Christ, the Son of God, how amongst his most heavy torments, and most inhuman pains on the cross, he interceded with his Father, for the forgiveness of his enemies; and reflect how like a patient Lamb he did not so much as once open his mouth against them in his just defence. Let us contemplate the Holy Ghost, who for no other cause seems to have appeared in the form of a dove, but that by such a representation he might teach us the dove-like meekness and lenity, and recom-

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mend sweet simplicity of manners. Behold Moses, with what patience he did bear the reproaches of the people, whereby he deserved this praise, "Moses was a most meek man, above all men which were upon the face of the earth." Behold David also, with what lenity of mind he heard Shimei cursing him, by returning no other answer to his bitter revilings and slanders, than this submissive one, "So let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, curse David." Whereupon he gently rebuked the sons of Zeruiah, that were for his proceeding against him, according to the rigour of justice, adding, "Who shall then say, wherefore hast thou done so?" And let him alone, and let him curse on. Whereby the greatness and generosity of his soul were made evident according to that of the poet,

Quo quisque est major, magis est placabilis ira:
Et faciles motus mens generosa capit.

Which will bear to be thus rendered:

In sordid souls may pride with anger live:
But generous minds can easily forgive.

Since so much the greater as any man is, so much the more easily is he to be entreated and pacified; and in gentle measures and methods according to him does true generosity of mind display itself. And another says to this effect: It may be accounted possibly a mighty thing to get the victory over others, and to be able to quell the fury of a multitude; but it certainly is a much greater victory to overcome your ownself, to subdue your own flesh, and to still and compose the raging of all your passions and lusts.

For he that with himself does first begin,
The laurel shall from greatest victors win.
And noblest triumphs he is sure to find,
Who governs well the kingdom of his mind.

Which the moralists have thus expressed, viz.

Ardua res vincere alios: Victoria major
Est, animi fluctus composuisse suos.

That is,

Others to conquer, 'tis but conquest small:
Thyself to conquer, is to conquer all.

Or thus,

Self-conquest shall from all the laurel gain:
And virtue shall the brightest crown obtain.

This was the general sentiment of the ancient Gentiles, both philosophers and poets, by the light of nature. Whence they likewise tell us, to spare them that are under, and bring down the pride of the haughty ones, are glorious actions indeed, in men truly great and honourable: According to that well known saying,

Parcere subjectis, and debellare superbos,
Hoc est in magnis gloria magna viris.

In English thus,

They that are to the conquer'd kind,
The greatest glory always find.
For they the greatest heroes are
That monsters quell, and victims spare.

For it is a great matter, said a wiseman, and glorious, to overcome a potent enemy: But it is a greater much, and a more glorious by far, for a man to overcome himself. And one also well says, true charity knows none to be angry with, but one's self. For it *envieth not*, and *thinketh no evil*. Whence likewise it is said,

Love the greatest conqueror is,
While friends it makes of enemies.

True love teaches us to bear with others, but never with ourselves. True peace consists not in having a great deal of good fortune, but in meekly bearing that which is adverse and cross, and in a contentedness under all estates. Publius said excellently well, *Ingenuitas non recipit contumeliam*; that is, *Nobility is not even capable of reproach*, or of being affronted: Thereby meaning true nobility of the mind, and generosity of the soul, which delight to exert themselves in a masculine and heroical patience, taking no offence at any, in like

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manner as they give none to any; but rejoicing to pass over and pardon whatever may be committed against our ownselves. And agreeable to this, also Seneca, *Si magnanimus fueris, nunquam judicabis tibi contumeliam fieri.* That is, If you have greatness of mind in you, never will you resent what by others is done against you, whether it be by reproachful and contumelious words or actions. For should a mad man rail at the sun, and curse him for giving no light; yea, should he reproach him as if he were nought but mere darkness itself; yet would not the sun be for this at all darkened, but would nevertheless continue on his course, and enlighten the world as before. Even so do you also in like manner, remembering that saying, *Genus magnum vindictæ est ignoscere;* or, there is no sweeter or better revenge than to forgive: And reflecting, that it is a royal part to do good and to suffer ill.

§ 5. Such wise and noble rules of life as these, many excellent persons among the heathens practised; leaving us thereby an example to shame us, who fall even short of them. Thus Pericles the Grecian orator, having heard a man upbraiding and reproaching him for the space of a whole day, night coming on, did kindly entreat him to be brought into his house, and there in a most friendly manner entertained him, lest he should take any harm, with no other reflecting word but this added, "It is easier to speak evil of virtue, than to possess it." Thus Phocion, the prince of the Athenians, when he had deserved exceedingly well of his country, by his noble exploits for it, but through the envy of some against him, was adjudged to death, and was about to undergo the sentence, when he was asked by one present, if he would command him any thing to his son, generously made answer, "Nothing else, but that he never take in hand to revenge this injury, which I suffer of my country." Thus Titus, the emperor, when it was told him, that two brethren did affect the empire of Rome, and that they had formally conspired his death, and had even bound themselves to do this, by an oath; made yet no scruple to bid them both to a supper with him, whereat he expressed all the marks of royal grace and kindness

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towards them; and on the morrow went along with them to the theatre, and set himself betwixt them to behold a play; with which admirable clemency of his, he overcame their improbity. Thus also when it was told to Julius Cesar, that Cato, the wise counsellor of Rome, his chief enemy, had laid violent hands on himself; "He hath bereaved me, (saith he) of the greatest victory that ever I had: For I had fully decreed with myself, freely to pardon him all the injuries he had ever done me."

§ 6. But most of all, who would not the extreme patience, and superlative meekness of the Son of God himself, move to forgive and love his enemies? For neither this of Cesar, nor any of those of the heathens whom I mentioned, nor any even of the saints, did in any degree come up to equal him. Since what greater injustice and barbarity can be thought on, than that the Son of God should be so miserably and so rudely handled by men, be made their laughing-stock, be scourged with stripes, be crowned with thorns, be spit upon; and lastly, be nailed on the cross? Oh! what an extreme impiety did he, out of his great and mere favour, most compassionately forgive! Oh! how did he pardon his most bitter and most barbarous enemies, crying, "Father, forgive them!"

§ 7. And truly to this very end our blessed Redeemer has set his example before our eyes, that it might be an ever-living mark to us in our whole life; by which whatsoever was proud or lofty in us, might be depressed and abased; whatsoever was weak should be strengthened; whatsoever was unprofitable, should be made profitable; whatsoever was crooked, should be made straight; whatsoever was defective, should be supplied: lastly, whatsoever was wicked or depraved, should be corrected.

§ 8. This blessed example then let us constantly behold, that we may be conformed to it. For what pride of man is so cruel and intolerable, that cannot be healed with the extreme humility of the Son of God? Or, what covetousness is so great, that cannot be sanctified with the poverty of Christ? what wrath so vehement, that his

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meekness cannot molify? what desire of revenge so barbarous, that his patience cannot assuage and reconcile? what inhumanity so great, which Christ with his charity and benefits, so great and so many, shall not expel? Lastly, what heart so hard, that is not mollified with the tears of Jesus Christ?

§ 9. Now who would not wish to be made like him, and to represent him in humility, poverty, meekness, patience, and charity? Oh! who would not bear his most lovely image, who loved his enemies to so high a degree? Or, who would not wish from the bottom of his heart, to be like God the Father, and his Son, and the Holy Ghost, and to carry within him the excellent image of the Holy Trinity, which chiefly consists in love and forgiveness? For it is the principal and highest of all the divine properties, to have mercy, to spare, to pardon, and to be gracious; whereupon it can no way be doubted, but that is the most noble and highest of all virtues, by which we become most like unto the most high God, and to the worthiest and the highest persons in the world, called by his name, most eminent in praise.

§ 10. Lastly, the highest degree of valour, and of solid honour, and virtue, is for a man to overcome himself; and consequently to forget injuries, pardon offences, and exercise clemency. He is stronger that overcomes himself (said a wise heathen) than he that overcomes strong walls: there is no valour can exceed it, and no virtue can go higher: With which that is a-kin in the Proverbs, viz. "A patient man is better than a strong man, and he that ruleth over his own mind, than one that overcometh cities." And that of the poet is not unlike to it:

Fortior est qui se, quam qui fortissima vincit
Mœnia: nec virtus altior ire potest.

Which may be thus, I think, expressed.

The man that towns and kingdoms doth subdue,
Shall not be half so great, my friend, as you:
If that your self you bravely conquer can;
By this you'll prove yourself the greater man.

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For virtue cannot ascend higher than this: There is not a higher step in the soul's ladder of ascension: there is no degree above it; nothing can be greater, or more heroical, if it rests in God, and ends in God, and is fulfilled in God.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Wherefore the Love of the Creator should be preferred to all Creatures.

1 John ii. 15.—*If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*

§ 1. THE heart of man is of such a nature and property, as it cannot cease to love; and therefore one man loves God, and another loves the world, and another himself. Whereby appears the absolute necessity of love, this most noble of all the passions or affections implanted in man by God, and enkindled originally by the Holy Ghost; and being so noble, it ought to be bestowed in the study and search only of the chief good, and given up entirely to God, by an earnest seeking daily of him, that he would vouchsafe to rekindle in us, the fire of this divine love, day by day, more and more. For he loved us first; and if his love toward us meet with love again, the same does more and more ardently embrace us; love mutually begetting love, according to that of St. John, "He that loveth me, is loved of my Father."

§ 2. Now in whomsoever the love of God is, they are disposed to love all men, and not only to wish well to them, but do them also all proper acts of beneficence, which is the property of the love which is grounded in God, and consequently they will circumvent no man, nor hurt any one in word or in deed. But for the most part, men, alas! are so fascinated with the love of the world, as they never admit the love of God into their heart: And hence that which they do openly in their hypocritical love towards their neighbour, is but a false

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shew, they being seekers herein of their own gain or advantage, and not of him or his. Whereas it were surely much more meet for us so to love the world, that no injury might be done thereby to the divine love, nor to the way and means thereof, that the course of it might not be any ways impeded; especially seeing there is so great vanity and vileness of the world, and so great eminency and majesty of God, that no comparison can be ever made betwixt them. For even as God infinitely excels all his creatures, so does the love of God in holiness, nobility, and dignity, excel all the love we have to any creature, and leaves it as it were behind, at a most exceeding great distance, not to be computed by any human arithmetic. No creature love is worthy therefore in the least to be compared to divine love.

§ 3. St. Paul says, 2 Cor. ix. 7, "Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof?" Which words of his may not improperly be applied to this case. Let us make a parallel after this manner, and say, Who is more worthy of our love, than he that has put it in our hearts, and to whose love we owe our very life? Since we all live by the love of God in Christ, whose way and manner of love is shewed to us throughout all our life, even of what condition soever we be. Who is it but He, that has planted in us this affection, whereby we love; and shall not he eat of the fruit thereof? What right has the world to eat of it, which never planted it?

§ 4. Wherefore even as mariners, when a storm comes, cast anchor; so we, as often as this great sea of the world tosses the little ship of our heart hither and thither, with the floods of passion and waves of sin, as wrath, pride, impatience, covetousness, and lust of the flesh, should remember to strengthen and stay ourselves by the anchor of divine charity, and the love of Christ, being ready rather to suffer the loss of all things, than to have ourselves pulled from him: according to that noble effort of this love in the apostle, saying, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature,

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unto all our studies and endeavours ought to aim. And we ought to profit and make progress therein daily; seeing that we are to this very end created, redeemed, and sanctified. Although perhaps it be more fit to say, Christ is our one only scope, to whom we are so much the nearer in neighbourhood as we are nearer to him in charity, and in whom both these ends are united most closely.

§ 4. For on this consideration God was made man, or the word was made flesh, that he might set before our eyes, a living and breathing image of his own love, and that he might manifest by this image, his love which was before hid in the inscrutable, incomprehensible essence and root, truly infinite and divine, that so men should be transformed hence through charity into this image of God; which image is no other than Christ, as has been shown.

§ 5. Furthermore, as in Christ, God and man are bound together by an undissolvable knot; so the love of God contains in it the love of our neighbour; which two are one, and can be no more easily disjoined and pulled asunder, than the divine and human nature in Christ. So then as he who has injured the human nature of Christ, is held guilty of the divinity also: he who offends man, is in like manner declared guilty of offending God. Neither can any man, the bond of charity being once broken, be angry with his neighbour, or separate himself from him, but by that very divorce and separation he declines from God, and separates himself from Christ, and so sins at once against his Creator and Redeemer.

§ 6. For as no man can offer an indignity to the manhood of Christ, without offering the same to the Godhead also, which is therewith united: and as no man has at any time sinned against the Son, but he has sinned likewise thereby against the Father, who sent forth his Son to be unto us sanctification and redemption: even so also can no man do an injury to man, without doing it to God also; or despitefully use the image, without treating the original in like manner. Whence there is no one that divides himself from his neighbour,

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by an undue direction in him of love; but he at the same time divides himself likewise from God; neither is there any one that is enraged against his neighbour, but his rage is in truth against God too: nor is there any one that treats man ill, whether it be by word or deed, but the trespass is committed against the Lord, and accordingly shall be judged by the Lord. Because herein he has sinned not so much against man, as against God, in whose image man was made; and because there is not any sin that men commit one against the other, but which is also a trespass against the Lord, as the law which was given by Moses expressly teaches us.

§ 7. Take hereof a natural similitude. When we make a circle, and in the midst thereof a point, from which we draw a great many lines to the circumference; all these lines, though never so distant in the circumference, must yet all meet together in this little point, which is invisible: they are here all united together in one, and all flow into one, be they never so many, or so wide asunder, yea, even directly opposite the one to the other. And not so much as one of all these lines, were their number as great as that of all the men of the world, can be disjoined from the rest, or have its communication broken off with them, without this disjunction be made in the middle point, which is the centre of communication, where all the lines meet together; that is, without they be broken off from the centre itself. So God is a point, or a centre, whose circumference is every where, particularly in all mankind; and no man can disjoin, or break off the lines of his love from his neighbour, but he must in like manner disjoin and break them off from God too at the same time. And also, as all these lines which cut the circle in twain, and which we call the diameters of it, run every one into the centre, and there unite all together indivisibly: Even so there may be a participation of our neighbour's sufferings, by a sort of central sympathy in God, in whom the lines of his and our love ought unanimously to concur. And thus will all true christians be united together in their centre, which is God, as has been said; and will have a fellow feeling with them that suffer, as St. Paul

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declares of himself, and as all the saints more or less experience. Which union and sympathy can be nothing else but charity. So then God is a centre, which if any man depart from, he thereby departs from the charity which is to his neighbour: But whosoever will continue near to God, and is willing to abide in God, as in his centre and rest, he must henceforth love his neighbour *as himself*, and be affected by a sympathetic love, both with his consolations and tribulations, as if they were his own. For if he do otherwise, it is hereby manifest, that in God he is not, who abides, as it were, in a point wherein all the lines are by faith coupled together in love.

§ 8. We have moreover a notable illustration hereof, and spiritual exemplification, in the history of Job. For when Job heard that all his temporal goods and estate were taken from him, he bore the loss most quietly, without ever taking it to heart, or giving any manner of sign of the least discontent at the will of God; for he still continued to bless God in his heart, and acknowledged that he who had given, had a right also to take away. But when it was told him, that he had lost his children too, then indeed it went to his very heart; and he thereupon "arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped." The children here signify those that are of our own flesh and blood, and ought to represent to every one his neighbours, as most nearly allied to him by nature, and to whom therefore the bowels of love ought to descend, whose property it has been observed to be to descend rather than ascend. And hence every one that has these bowels in him of the God and Father of mercies, is thereby most tenderly moved, and yearns after the good of his neighbour; and when he hears that it goes ill with him, this comes nearer to his heart, than if he had lost all the goods he has in the world. For having in God such a central sympathy, as before has been described, this affliction for the soul of his brother must be more grievous to him, than if that affliction had touched his fields. For the property of true love is, to be moved with other men's miseries more than with one's own.

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§ 9. Therefore, O happy mankind, if we could all live together in love, then frauds would cease, then injuries would not be known, neither would there a man be found to vex another, or one complain of damage from another. And that we might think of this, and lay it deeply to heart, therefore God Almighty, in the beginning of the world, when he had brought forth many beasts and plants, on the other side created but *one* man; from him, a little afterward, producing Eve; to the end, that human kind being thus all derived from one stock, and mindful of their own original and kindred, should conspire all in love, and unite in mutual affection one towards another. *For how good and how pleasant* would it have been for all men, like *brethren*, to have *dwelt together in unity*, as originated from one parent: This would indeed have been like the most precious sacred ointment, distilling from the head of the everlasting High Priest and King in the heavens, and descending down to the very utmost skirts of his royal and priestly garments, in an holy generation of sons and daughters, according to the heavenly exemplar. This would have brought down heaven, as it were, upon earth; and would even now, were it possible to be effected, turn our wilderness into a paradise. Oh happy and blessed life of loving souls, upon whom God has commanded a blessing forevermore! Oh, charity! how amiable art thou! And how easy and joyous is thy yoke to them that find thee!

§ 10. The excellency of this charity, commanded by God to us, is such that the want of it, is that which causes us to faint both in strength of body and mind. It is a thing most convenient to our very nature, and that which certainly brings with it a most quiet and blessed life. And if the same God Almighty had commanded thee, O man! to hate thy neighbour, then he had set thee a far harder burden, and laid a far heavier yoke upon thee: For hatred and revengefulness of mind to an enemy torments and cruciates itself. But,

§ 11. On the other side, love recreates the whole man. Also to those that love God, it is a pleasant thing to love their neighbour; it is hard and difficult only to those

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who do not love God. But if your depraved nature hold it a hard matter to settle itself on the love of your neighbour, then bethink yourself how you shall take in hand a far harder task, if you incur the pangs of hell; which if you had rather do, than offer to be reconciled in love to your neighbour, certainly you are the most unhappy, if not the most stupid, of all men alive; seeing there is no great labour, nor can be, in such a reconciliation, which a man of small experience may understand of himself, and which requires but a heart to set about it. What is there hard in it? Love is the easiest thing in the world, and bears all things, without feeling the burden of them. And as by faith, we have, according to the apostle, peace with God; so by charity we have in like manner, peace with men, and great tranquillity and rest of heart.

§ 12. It is love that quenches the fire of hell in the soul: But by enmity it is blown up, and wrath fans the sparks thereof. Charity and reconciliation make our minds quiet and easy: hatred and revenge grievously vex and torment them: For this is the property of all virtues, that they reward their followers with peace of conscience, whom of their own accord they make to increase in worthy esteem and honour: And of vices, that they punish their favourers with the punishment which they deserve, and cover their slaves with shame and ignominy in the end. Wherefore, in order to obtain true peace and tranquillity of mind, and to be delivered both from the shame and punishment of having sinned against your neighbour, that method of reconciliation must be taken which God has appointed himself by his word.

§ 13. But how friendships are to be renewed, and reconciliation to be made with an offended neighbour, we are taught by scripture: which commands the offender to be reconciled to his neighbour, and to ask pardon of him; then to restore the thing taken from him, that is, the thing itself, the principal, and the fifth part over and above to him whom they have defrauded or offended; and if there be none to receive it, they give it to the Lord.

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§ 14. Which restitution of things unlawfully taken away, is commanded in most express words, by the law, and is a necessary part of true repentance. Whereupon St. Augustin says, "The sin is not remitted, unless the thing feloniously taken be restored." And, presently, as a declaration of what he had spoken, he addeth, "*Cum res aliena, quæ reddi potest, non redditur, non agitur, sed fingitur, pœnitentia.*" When the thing that is taken away may be restored, and is not, there is no repentance, but it is feigned. Because it is the property of true repentance, which converts man unto God, to contemn all earthly goods, and esteem all things as dung in respect of the grace of God, which Zaccheus by his example teaches us to do (but very few such are now to be found) to cleanse their heart, to purge their consciences, and to break off the bonds of their sin, by faith and restitution of the thing wrongfully detained.

§ 15. For in the heart and in the conscience, he remains still a thief before God, who even keeps back, and does not restore the thing taken away by theft, however he cease to steal any more. Wherefore that repentance may be true, and the conscience may be pure, restitution is to be made as much as is possible for one to make: Or if he be not able to make full restitution, he must pray to God with all his heart, that he would in his room, restore the things taken away, to his neighbour again, or what may be better in their stead. For it is absolutely needful that satisfaction be made both to God and to man: And the due means must be made use of to reconcile one's self to both, according as we are directed and commanded. Which means we have both in the law and in the gospel sufficiently set forth.

§ 16. Now seeing that a sinner is thus bound in two things, or is a debtor in a two fold respect, even a debtor to God, and to his neighbour, that his repentance may be full and efficacious, it is required that both be satisfied; God not acknowledging or accepting any man's repentance, unless he be reconciled in the first place to his neighbour. Therefore it suffices not, if you say unto God, "Most loving and most merciful

God, I acknowledge and confess that I have offended and done injury to my neighbour; I have damaged him by wicked gain and fraud; and lastly, have dealt so with him, as I would not another should deal with me; which iniquity I humbly intreat thee, O Lord, to pardon me for thy dear Son's sake." Be not deceived, God will not be thus mocked by you: It is all an abomination before him. For even this prayer is in itself most unjust, and God repels it as such; and says, "Restore thou that, which with fraud and usury thou hast taken, and then thy pardon shall be ready."

§ 17. Not as if a man after this manner should deserve, or that in restitution there is any merit: No, it is not so; because this is a debt due to your neighbour, and not only so, but also, many things more by you are owing to your neighbour; and because likewise it is the divine will and precept. For thus has the Lord commanded: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: For this (saith he) is the law and the prophets." Also he has declared: "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down and shaken together, and running over shall men give into your bosom. For (mark it well) with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again." And again, he has expressly charged: "Leave there thy gift (oblation or sacrifice) before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled as the law has prescribed to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." With which agrees what he spoke by the prophet Isaiah, saying, "Wash ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." And again by the same evangelical prophet he thus reasons: "Is not this the fast that I have chosen: to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to

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deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee, the glory of the Lord shall be thy rereward." All which do with one consent proclaim, that God will not accept the repentance of any man, or hear his prayer, or accept his alms and oblations, unless he first be reconciled to his neighbour, and make him all the restitution that is in his power.

CHAP. XXX.

Of the Fruits of Charity.

1 COR. xiii. 4, 5, 6, 7.—*Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.*

§ 1. AS the tree of life was planted in the midst of paradise, bearing fruits that made him live forever who ate thereof; so has the Lord in the midst of the paradise of the christian church, set up Jesus Christ, as a means to give life and nourishment to all such as unfeignedly believe in his name; he being the ever-springing tree of life in the midst of this paradise of God. The whole substance of the christian religion consists properly in faith and in love. As by faith in Christ, the life of a christian is most endeared to God; (the life he lives being not so much his own, as the life of Christ in him) so love proves in him the very productive principle of all such charitable acts as relate to his neighbour. By faith he takes, as it were, of the tree of life; by love he digests what he has taken, and sets forth the virtue thereof by suitable works of charity. As it is impossible to please God without faith, so is it impossible

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to serve our neighbour without love. And so true is it, that all virtues, how shining soever they be, are without charity, of no account at all in the sight of God, that even faith itself is deemed dead if it be without it. For although faith, in relation to justification, has no regard to works (let them either precede, accompany, or follow justification;) but Jesus Christ only, on whom it lays hold; yet is that faith but mere shew and pretence which is not attended by love, though it should even work by miracles. For as a body destitute of a soul is dead; so the inward spiritual man (whose members are the christian virtues, as having their dependence upon him) is dead without charity in all his members, as having nothing to boast of besides the bare name of faith, which the false christian puts upon his naked profession. Therefore has the apostle declared, that charity should be an index of faith, and that faith should work by love. It is true that faith, inasmuch as it justifies a sinner, excludes works from having any voice at all in this court: Yet when faith now comes to appear in public, and performs the functions of mutual love among men, it will needs be accompanied with a train of good works; this being the true test whereby faith can be known. This is that faith which *worketh by love;* and that tree which bears plenty of fruits, as from the following consideration will farther appear.

§ 2. The first then of these fruits is *patience* and *long-suffering*. The nature and constitution of this virtue no man did ever more fully express than Christ himself the true tree of life, whose goodly and salutary fruits we ought to eat of, and to turn them into the juice and blood of Christ in us. Now therefore even as he by his wonderful long-suffering, did bear the malice and wickedness of the world, that thereby he might allure and draw sinners to repentance; so then order your life and manners, that the most meek and gentle Christ may live in you, and you in him, as a member united to its head, and ye may breathe together in one, as from one spirit.

§ 3. The second fruit is *benignity*, or kindness and graciousness; which also was chief and principal in Christ, according to that of the Psalm, "Grace did drop

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from thy lips :" Or, "grace is poured into thy lips." And so that also of the evangelist: "They wondered at the words of grace, (or gracious words) which proceeded out of his lips." Which words do you hear, that you may follow him; and they will cause you also to love your neighbour, and to express this your love to him, by all acts of kindness and courtesy; and Christ will speak by your mouth, and you shall remain united to him in perpetual charity.

§ 4. The third fruit is, not to be emulous, or *envious* and *revengeful*, but be ready to remit and pardon; than which nothing is more proper to God, of whom holy David says, "The Lord is merciful and gracious; slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide, neither will he keep his anger forever. He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." To which agrees that of Ezekiel, "But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him; in his righteousness that he hath done, he shall live." And in Jeremiah, the same is also farther confirmed; "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee. Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he a pleasant child? For since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still; therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." And lastly, this divine goodness and mercifulness is by Isaiah most clearly expressed to be the very character of God, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Therefore be herein also like unto God; forgive, I say, pardon and forget the tres-

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passes of your neighbour, and in like manner Christ will pardon also your offences and trespasses; and you shall have his spirit, and shall remain in him.

§ 5. The fourth fruit is *candour*, not to *misjudge thy neighbour*, not to vaunt it over him, not rashly to censure him, not causelessly to expose him, not crookedly, or perversely, or disingenuously to deride him before others, nor by sycophantising, or by collusion, any wise to injure him or his good name; but contrariwise, to let your heart be seen in your countenance, and to do all things ingenuously, and clearly, and above-board, without hypocrisy. An example whereof Christ also gives us, who carried himself equally both to friends and foes, and from the bottom of his heart, was always willing to bestow marks of love on all that came in his way. Now whenever you endeavour to walk in your Master's footsteps, then this candour and ingenuity of Christ, will be none of the least, to be expressed in your life and conduct. As the Lord has most heartily espoused our good and interest, so ought we to practise the same among ourselves also: if we wish to remain united to Christ as living members to the head.

§ 6. The fifth fruit is, not to be *puffed up*. Charity is not of a haughty and supercilious temper: It is not swelled with any high conceit on account of its own deeds and performances. Behold again thy Lord Jesus! When a woman in a great concourse of people lifted up her voice and said: "Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps that gave thee suck. Yea, (replied he) rather blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it;" humbly removing from himself all the praises, though entirely due to him, and resigning them over to those that truly loved the Lord. Which if you also resolve to do, then truly the humble Christ lives in you, and you in him; it being the constant character of true charity, to transfer the praises of men on another whom it thinks more worthy of the same.

§ 7. The sixth effect of charity is, *not to behave itself unseemly*. A man of charity is not easily soured with discontent, or with any morose and untractable humour. His conversation is easy, obliging, and so readily com-

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posed to all the offices of love and humanity, that the kindness residing within, may even be read in his very looks and countenance. Of this sweetness of temper the Lord Jesus has left us the brightest pattern. He did all with a spirit of mildness and lenity; and when he conversed with sinners, pity and compassion most visibly appeared in his mein and aspect: Which sweet temper of Christ ought to be transfused into our souls also, that our life at last may prove some transcript even of this most blessed original.

§ 8. The seventh fruit of true love, is, *not to seek what is a man's own.* A true christian has by love, recovered that amplitude and liberty of soul, as to serve his fellow-creatures freely, without any by-ends of self, or self-interest. Nothing is more pleasing to him, than to do good to many, without the least expectation of gain from any. This pure and disinterested love is originally lodged in God himself. He gives all things freely, without receiving any profit and interest at all. That he has commanded us to worship and to fear him, is only to make us proper objects of his divine love and blessing. And lo! what a glorious pattern of disinterested love Christ has set us! As a tree without envy and respect of persons imparts its fruits to *all* in the most universal manner; so has Christ, and God in Christ, given himself to us as the greatest and most excellent good. Go now, O man, and practise the same: Then Christ, the ever living vine, will bud forth in you, and you shall be a fruitful plantation of the Lord.

§ 9. The eighth fruit of love is, *not to be provoked easily to wrath.* A man that has tasted of true love, is not apt to conceive any bitterness, much less to utter it by cursing and railing speeches, which even unman a man; but to imitate Christ Jesus, who did not cry out, or so much as open his mouth against the wrath of his crucifiers, but spake from the cross mere benediction and life, and interceded with his Father for their forgiveness. And although he did indeed denounce threatenings against Chorazin, Capernaum, and Bethsaida, and against the Pharisees also, uttering many dreadful woes against them; yet this proceeded not from a bitter or

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revengeful mind, but was a serious and severe exhortation to lead them to repentance; that they might be saved, and be happy. Therefore let us be cautious, lest any root of bitterness should at any time spring up in us, and so hinder our charity, and many be offended thereat; and let us be provoked to nothing but to love one another, and that in Christ; for so shall we abide in Christ, and God in him shall be fully reconciled to us.

§ 10. The ninth fruit of charity is, *not to think any evil*, or to meditate ill, which is the property also of Almighty God, as he testifies of himself. "For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the Lord, and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the Lord, and I will bring you again unto the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive." Whereupon it follows, he that has in him the thoughts of peace towards his neighbour, has the heart of God, and the mind of Christ; and as a living member, that is knit unto his head, is animated and inspired by him.

§ 11. The tenth fruit is, *it rejoices not in iniquity*, nor has pleasure in the injury or oppression of injustice, as wicked Shimei rejoiced when David fled from before Absalom; but it imitates Christ Jesus, who, with most tender compassion, beholding Peter's perjury, did with his most benign and gracious aspect, rectify him, and raise him up again, according to the psalmist, "God doth raise them that are fallen:" who also deplored bitterly the evil that was to befall the men of Judea, and the destruction of their temple and city. Lastly, who with all his heart desired to bring his wandering and lost sheep into the right way, and with a sweet and most gentle voice, to allure them home. Let us imitate this so great a master of love, and if any one among us be fallen from his love, let us deplore such a one after this manner which is set us to follow: let us instruct him in the spirit of love and lenity, and help to bear his bur-

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den, that we may fulfil the law of Christ: this law, I say, that first did bear the burden of our sins, that so thereby we might be delivered from the law of death. And let him be in us, as in true members of Him our head; who is thenceforth become unto us life, sense, and spirit. And hence also love rejoices together with the truth, and is pleased exceedingly where all things are done rightly and decently; after the example of Christ, who at the return of his seventy disciples, did at their well-doing rejoice very heartily, and confess the joy that was in him to his heavenly Father; and as also the angels in heaven rejoice (as Christ himself teaches us) at the return of a sinner: and if we do the like, then truly we have the mind of God, of Christ, and of his holy angels.

§ 12. The eleventh fruit of charity is, to bear and suffer all things in others; believing as far as is possible, all good things of them for the present, and *hoping* all good things for the future; not hastily despairing of any, but enduring all ill things from them with expectation of better things hereafter, and in the mean time complying with them in all things as far as safely can be done, for preserving the bond of peace; after the example of blessed Paul, who was made weak with the weak, that he might profit the weak; and was made all things to all men, that he might be an instrument to save all. The same heavenly charity believes all things, suspecting no evil of one's neighbour; hopes all things, praying and wishing that nothing may fall out amiss to one's neighbour: And lastly, it sustains all things for his sake, that it may go so much the better with him, and we be made hereby more profitable to our neighbour. All which our blessed Saviour, by a lively example of his own life, did teach us in his bearing most heavy injuries and reproaches for our sins, as also most inhuman scourgings and extreme poverty and hunger, that we in him and by him, might obtain joy and honour.

§ 13. The twelfth fruit of love is, not to be weary, nor to cease: like unto God, whose mercy from eternity to eternity is upon those that fear him; who expects

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and waits that he may be gracious to us; who, that he may have mercy on us, rose up to spare us, and will be exalted in showing us his mercy; whose love is strong as death, which many waters cannot extinguish, and from which nothing can ever separate us; and who has mercy on us with everlasting mercies. And although he denies indeed on a certain occasion, that henceforth he will have mercy, saying, "Therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, and destroy thee; I am weary with repenting:" To those only it appertains who repel obstinately the divine mercies, who contemn his grace, and who abuse them with high contempt; but not to those that fear him, according to that of another prophet, "The mountains shall be moved, and the little hills shall tremble, but my mercy shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee." After which example we must regulate our love, so that it may never fail or be weary, no not even towards our enemies; but even as Christ did, so must we from the same tender bowels of his most compassionate and never tired love, as from his heart in us, pray, *Father, forgive them.* So let Christ live and pray in you.

§ 14. In a word, love is the greatest and noblest of all the virtues; 1st. because God himself is love; 2dly. because it is the end of the commandments, and the summary or collection of the whole law; 3dly. because it is eternal, and never-failing, so that it will not vanish with faith, but our happiness by it be made to appear, which is the end of faith; 4thly. because it works all things; and all virtues, without it, are as nothing; and last of all, because it will in this life give us a testimony, through faith in Christ, that we shall have eternal blessedness. Whereupon it undoubtedly follows, that christian charity must needs excel all gifts and arts whatsoever, and that nothing can be ever greater or higher, than experimentally to know the super-eminent love of the knowledge of Christ, that we may thereby be filled in all the fulness of Christ.

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CHAP. XXXI.

That without Charity the best Gifts may be corrupted: And how they are by Self-love and Pride dangerously infected.

1 COR. xiii. 1.—*Though I speak with the tongues of men, and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.*

§ 1. LEST any should marvel why St. Paul here adorns charity with so many praises; "You must know, (said Luther,) that God himself *is charity;* and that consequently the same praise doth belong to both: Neither can there be a greater virtue in man, or in God himself, than *love.*" As highly as God is to be exalted, so highly is the love that is in God to be exalted also. Nothing can be higher: the height thereof cannot be comprehended, nor can the depth of it be fathomed. And this love is shed abroad by him in the hearts of his saints; which love alone, as communicated from above, and bearing fruit here below, in the vessels prepared for its reception, is properly the true charity which is really and indeed a participation of the divine nature.

§ 2. For we are to understand, that love, as it is in man, when it takes the name of charity, is twofold. The one is a love that is true, hearty, living, sincere, and disinterested; the other is a love that is false, outward, dead, hypocritical, cloaked, and selfish. The first of these loves St. Paul describes by a most ample and distinct catalogue of all the several fruits and properties thereof, of which we have already spoken. The latter, however in outward shew it may seem to affect indeed the divine and human good, and to consider the profit and benefit of mankind; yet inwardly, and in the heart, respects nothing but private profit and honour. And whatever flows from this fountain, comes not from God, but from the devil; for it is a poison infecting all good works, and the most excellent gifts.

§ 3. For as a flower that is in sight, in taste, and in smell, most beautiful and sweet, most fragrant and de-

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lightful, if it contain in it any venom, is not approved either by the beauty of the colour, nor by the pleasantness of the smell, nor by the sweetness of the taste; because (if not prevented) it is deadly and fatal to man: So in like manner, man, if he be adorned with the gifts of angels, and if he want charity, and so be full of avarice, pride, self-love, and arrogancy, then those gifts not only fail in their fruits, but become pernicious and deadly to him. For all which is good, always ought to have God in the beginning, and God in the ending; who, as he is the only author of every good thing and gift; so whatsoever he works in you, is truly good and only good. But it is quite otherwise, if the desire of honour, or private profit, shall have any design in it; or if there be the least of pride, or self-love, in that which you do. For when it comes not from God, and is not carried on by the impulse and leading of his Holy Spirit, it can never be good.

§ 4. It is said, that a certain saint of old should wish, that he might be of no other use to God, than his own right-hand was to himself; which seeing it was nothing but an instrument readily to give and receive what was fit, or as it was directed and commanded by the soul, did consequently arrogate neither honour nor glory to itself. And indeed, it is meet and fit we all should be such: And because all things come from God to us freely, in like manner we should render all things freely to our neighbour, to whom we are to carry ourselves in single simplicity, without the desire of glory and praise, and to do all for them out of pure love. For to God alone, as to the author, is honour and glory due: But to us nothing at all. We are only instruments created and made fit to receive and deliver. And if any man be without this pure love, and sincere charity, let him receive in, or deliver out never so much, he with all his gifts is nothing: "Although he speak with the tongues of angels, though he can prophesy, and though he know all mysteries, and all sacred knowledge, and have never so much faith too, even so that it would remove mountains, and though he give moreover all that he hath to the poor, and give himself to be burned:" All this will

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avail him nought; he is no more than *sounding brass*, he makes a noise, and an appearance, and that is all.

§ 3. All self-love is of the devil, and was his apostacy by which he fell from heaven, and for which he was worthily driven thence. For when God had created Lucifer, the most beautiful angel, and adorned him with most excellent gifts of wisdom, light, glory, and spiritual riches, he began to admire himself in his gifts, as a peacock admires his fine feathers, and to love, honour, and praise himself, which thing was the first step to his ruin, namely, to give honour to himself, not to God, and to turn his love from God to himself; and hereupon he was worthily cast out of heaven with all his companions, whom his pride and self-love, by contagion, had infected. Neither was he contented with his principality amongst the angels, according to that of St. Jude, "The angels which kept not their principality:" and that of St. Paul, "Having spoiled principalities and powers, he (Christ) made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in himself."

§ 4. Now by what sin Lucifer procured his own ruin, he was the cause by the same of the loss of man, by turning him from the love of God, to the love of himself; whereby self-love and arrogancy came to be so great in him, as even to affect the similitude of God. Hence he was after the same manner cast out of Paradise, as Lucifer out of heaven, leaving to us all the heritage of pride and self-love. And this is the fall of Adam, which has been described, which all men in like manner do in themselves act over again; and which flesh and blood transmit from one to another.

§ 5. The means of amendment, and cure hereof, ought no other ways to be sought, as it can no other ways be obtained, but by the precious merit of Christ apprehended by faith; whereby we are thenceforth renewed in Christ, and our flesh is crucified. Hence we do not love ourselves any more, but hate ourselves; that is, all our own works now begin to displease us: We do not honour ourselves, or extol ourselves, but deny ourselves; that is, we set nought by ourselves, or by what we do. Lastly, we do not now seek our own private

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praise and glory; but, by denying all things that we have, we place our pleasure and trust in no earthly things, but fight and strive manfully with flesh and blood, our inward enemies, that God alone may in us be glorified; which, whoever does not, he is not the disciple of Christ; seeing that by this means, the conversion and transformation of the human nature must be effected, if at all.

§ 6. Now seeing that the means was greater than the strength of man, and surpassed his nature, which of itself, and by its own natural tendency, can do nothing but love itself, favour itself, and boast of itself, and cannot forbear to seek its own ends; or, to speak all in a word, to *sin;* therefore it behoved God, in commiseration of its present fallen state, to be the beginning, the middle, and the end of the renovation, and the Son of God to take the form of a man upon him, and thereby to renew our nature, that thereby every one of us, being regenerated by him, in him, and from him, might become a new creature. For even as in Adam we are dead bodily and spiritually, so it behoves us in Christ to rise again, and be spiritually and bodily renewed. And even as by carnal nativity we entered upon the sin of Adam, as upon a certain heritage; so in Christ, by a spiritual birth, we must be justified, and enter by faith upon his justice, or righteousness, as upon our inheritance. Moreover, as we radically draw from Adam sin, and especially self-love, pride, and ambition; so from Christ, by faith, and by the Holy Ghost, our nature is to be renewed and sanctified; all self-love, pride, and ambition, are to die in us: And it behoves us to get a new heart and spirit from Christ, in exchange for the old one we have from Adam. And by reason of this new birth in us, Christ is called Father, and the everlasting Father, or the Father of the world to come.

§ 9. Whereupon it follows, that all the works of christians, and all the gifts which shall be acceptable to God, ought to proceed purely from the new creature; that is, from faith in Christ, and from the Holy Ghost. And if it be not so, whatsoever things they have, though they be most excellent gifts, and even miracles them-

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selves, yet before God they are void, and are all to no purpose. Also towards our neighbour, all things ought to be done in charity, and for edification, and without hope, or prospect of private gain, or honour. For an example of which, as a most excellent pattern for us, God Almighty gave us his Son, in whom there was no spot of self-love, or arrogance; no desire of private profit, or praise; and nothing but sincere and mere love and humility. Nor was he as other saints, proposed to us to imitate, because their example is from without and may by us be outwardly beheld, and so renewed; but that he might by faith live and breathe in us. And when it so comes to pass, then all our works, words, and thoughts, (and therefore to be sure all our knowledge and love) proceed wholly from Christ as from a living fountain and original within us; but if otherwise, then all our works and gifts, be they even angelical, or of what kind soever, are nevertheless nothing at all worth. For where self-love is, there the hatred of God is; where pride is, there the contempt of God is, and by no reason it can ever be, that works springing from thence, should be ever acceptable to God.

§ 10. Let us therefore do this; let us beseech Almighty God from the bottom of our hearts, to give us true faith and sincere love, defiled with no desire of honour, profit, and glory, poisoned with no impure streams of selfishness; which being once obtained, not only illustrious gifts and works, but the very least also, even a cup of cold water, will be then most dear and acceptable to God. For a small work that proceeds out of sincere charity, and profound humility, is more excellent, and better by far, than all the great ones that have their original from the desire of glory.

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CHAP. XXXII.

Great Gifts do not demonstrate a Man to be a Christian, and acceptable to God; but Faith, as it works by charity.

1 cor. iv. 20.—*For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.*

§ 1. ST. Paul, to describe a christian in brief, summing up the matter, says, "The end of the law is charity, from a pure heart and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned:" as if he should say, that for one to be a christian and acceptable to God; there are required no hard and lofty matters, no worldly wisdom, no human learning, no great gifts, no eloquence, no knowledge of tongues; lastly, no miracles: but that he have only faith, in charity, to do all things from a mind wholly resigned to God, devout and well addicted; and not careless of the motions and dictates of the Holy Ghost. Wherefore let us not much regard how expert any one is in the tongues, or how eloquent he is, but how he shews forth his faith by love, and by mortifying the flesh: "For they that be Christ's, do mortify the flesh with the lusts thereof;" under which are contained self-esteem, self-love, covetousness, vain-boasting, ambition, interestedness, with greedy hunting after praise and filthy lucre. Whereupon blessed Paul denies the kingdom of God to consist in words, or gifts, but will have it to be in virtue and power, in the living exercise of virtue, in the power which is of faith, and which in the soul produces charity, meekness, lowliness, and humility. And therefore no man, I say, no man is in greater grace and favour with God, or to be esteemed more blessed, because he is endued with brighter and greater gifts; but because he is found in Christ Jesus by faith, and lives in him as a new creature. Great gifts do not make a man happy: And if any man shall have attained to so great and such peculiar and marvellous gifts, as even no man else has, or ever had; yet while he neglects daily repentance, and is not renewed in Christ, he is nothing worth. And if

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he deny not the world, although he have never so much learning, and never so many natural or supernatural gifts; if he despise not also himself, yea, and hate his ownself: lastly, if he do not depend on the pure and the sole grace of God, or depend otherwise than an infant depends on the mother's breasts, he with all his arts and all his gifts, shall be in danger of being damned. This is a thing most manifest.

§ 2. For these are not given us of God, that by them we should be great in the sight of God, or blessed in his kingdom; but purely for the edification of the church. Therefore when the seventy disciples returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name;" our Lord Christ answers them, do not rejoice in this, for neither miracles, nor gifts shall save you: "But rejoice ye that your names are written in the book of life;" that is, rejoice because ye really believe and acknowledge me.

§ 3. By faith Moses was saved, not by his miracles: and Miriam, the sister of Moses, who was endued with the gift of prophecy, and one by whom the Spirit of the Lord did speak, was yet punished with leprosy. And the apostles themselves, not because of their miracles, or of the gift of tongues, but for their faith, were made the citizens of heaven. Let us then all remain in faith, I say, let both the least and the greatest remain in faith, humility, and repentance; let us remain in daily crucifying and mortifying the flesh, and in the new creature: which new creature, as it lives in Christ by faith and charity; so in like manner, Christ lives in it: So let us be found, that Christ may acknowledge us for his, and may abide with us.

§ 4. Let christian charity also remain to be that new life of the new man; yea, the life of Christ in the faithful, and that efficacious and working power of the Holy Ghost, by which St. Paul wishes us "to be filled in all the fulness of God." Like to that of St. John, "God is love, and he that remaineth in love, remaineth in God." Whereupon it follows, that he that feels this christian love in his heart, feels there God himself:

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Where, as a certain fore-runner, or leading-star, this love of him is present. And therefore, St. Paul considering this divine love as a most noble tree, he from the very root describes it with all the fruits thereof. *Charity,* (saith he) *is patient, is kind,* &c. All which are the essential properties of christians, and consequently, the life of the new man. And to speak in a word, God the Father is love, God the Son is love, God the Holy Ghost is love; also the whole mystical body, which is Christ, or the christian church, is bound together in the bond of love: So there is but one God, one Christ, one spirit, one baptism, one faith; and lastly, the happy and eternal life, shall be nothing but mere love. Wherefore, if any man live not in love, the same manifestly is a dead member, if he may be said to be at all in the body of Christ. For even as a dead member is not warmed with natural heat, nor nourished with proper food, and for that cause is altogether without life: Even so he that lives not in love, that is in charity, has not the spiritual life of Christ, but is dead to God and Christ; forasmuch as he is without faith, and is as a dry tree, and as a withered branch without juice from the vine, which is Christ, and so is to be cut off. Lastly, he is without God, without Christ, and without the Holy Ghost, without the christian church, and without life eternal: In which life God, face to face, shall be seen, who is love itself. For God is love.

CHAP. XXXIII.

God hath no Respect to the Works of any one; but judgeth the Work according to the Heart.

PROV. xxi. 2.—*Every way of a man seemeth right to himself, but God trieth the heart.*

¶ 1. WHEN the prophet Samuel, by the express commandment of God, went to anoint David king, he entered his father's house, and would have anointed his

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first-born, but the Lord said, "Do not thou respect his countenance, nor the height of his stature, seeing I have rejected him, neither do I judge according to the countenance of a man: for a man seeth those things that are open and evident, but the Lord beholdeth the heart." By which example God teaches us, that he has no regard to any man's person, be he never so great and illustrious, when his heart is void of true goodness, and destitute of love, faith, and humility; but that he esteems the works by the inward spirit and intention of the mind, and thence allows or disallows them, according as it is written. Moreover, all gifts, how great soever, how illustrious, praise-worthy, and excellent soever they are in the judgment of the world, unless they proceed from a pure heart, unless they respect the sole honour of God, and the profit of our neighbour, and unless they be entirely free, and altogether separated from pride, arrogancy, and self-love, and from all desire of private praise and glory, they cannot please God.

§ 2. Therefore, whoever you are, O man, be assured, that if God should bestow on you alone all the gifts he has bestowed on all men, yet if you should not use them to the profit and edification of your neighbour, and to the honour and glory of God, to which end God has bestowed them upon men, but should use them as certain instruments to you of praise, glory, honour, and lucre, God would abhor them no otherwise than the greatest sins. This you may learn from the most deplorable example of Prince Lucifer, than whom a fairer and more beautiful angel heaven had not: but who, when he vilified the gifts of God, with his own honour and self-love, and did not purely in all these respect the love and glory of God, by his own act became a devil, and was cast down hereupon from heaven. Therefore those things which God will accept and account well of, ought to proceed purely out of faith alone, through the most pure love of God and our neighbour; and ought to be void of all self-love and private interest, as much as is possible for man, by the grace of God, in this state of infirmity. And for this end, St. Paul, thus writes; "If I speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have not charity, I am

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as a sounding brass :" that is, I am in vain, and altogether unprofitable, and all that I do is vain. In truth, God regards no lovely faculty but in humble hearts ; no arts, no learning, no ability, but where our spirit sincerely seeks the honour of his name, and edification of our neighbour : He respects not a miraculous faith, to remove mountains, for the sake of glory, but the *pure and contrite in spirit, trembling at his word :* he regards him not who is covetous of fame and renown, though he should distribute all he hath to feed the poor, and give even his body to be burned alive ; but the heart, the prime cause of them all. All which is evident by many examples to be brought.

§ 3. Cain and Abel both of them brought sacrifices to God, one of them acceptable, the other execrable, by reason of the disparity of minds. The same reason there was of David and Saul ; both attended God's service, but with unlike event for the aforesaid cause. David, Manasses, Nebuchadnezzar, and Peter, by repentance obtained grace ; on the contrary, Saul, Pharaoh, and Judas, did miss of it by reason of the same variety of mind ; Pharaoh and Saul, no less than Manasses, used the same prayer, *Lord, I have sinned,* but they received unlike rewards. Judith and Hester, no less than the modish daughters of Israel, adorned themselves, and combed themselves : with praise and renown the one, but the other with dispraise and reprehension. In like manner, the prayer of Hezekiah, Joshua, and Gideon, by which they required a sign from heaven, being approved, is praised : Contrariwise, the Pharisees doing the same, but not with the same intention, are reproved by the Lord. The Publican and the Pharisee, both pray in the temple ; but both are not approved. The Ninevites, and the Jews, and Pharisees, fast alike ; but the one God heard, the other he heard not : Wherefore they cry ; " Wherefore have we fasted, and thou regardest us not?" The widow who brought into the treasury but two small mites, is praised by Christ ; whereas he that gave more is not. Herod and Zaccheus, at the sight of God, do both rejoice ; but they had very different rewards. The holy martyrs for Christ offered up them-

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selves unto death: Ahab and Manasses offer unto the Lord their own children, and God accepted the sacrifice of the one, and the other was rejected. Which variety proceeds from no other cause than from the heart, which God only respects: Whereupon he only accepts those works which come from a heart unfeigned, and out of sincere charity, and true humility: contrariwise, whatsoever gifts they be, if pride, self-love, and the contagion of filthy lucre infect them, he rejects them.

CHAP. XXXIV.

We do nothing of ourselves for our Salvation, but God doth all things for us; only we admit of his Grace, and yield to it.

1 COR. i. 30.—*But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.*

§ 1. BY this sentence St. Paul teaches us what things are necessary for our salvation; by Christ all things are done for us. For when we were ignorant of the way of life, he was *made wisdom unto us;* when we were sinners, he was made *our righteousness;* when we were abominable, our *sanctification;* when we were damned, our *redemption.* Whereupon it remains, that man does not confer one jot to the beginning, middle, and end of his salvation, with all his merits of works, strength, and free will: For sin he could of himself, but he could not justify himself again; lose, but not recover; kill, but not raise again to life; be subdued to the devil, but not set free from him again. For even as a dead carcass cannot quicken itself again; so neither can a man, which is dead in sin, quicken himself; and consequently all men being dead in sin, as the apostle witnesses, none can help themselves. Also, even as we did not add so much as one hair to our creation, so neither do we to our redemption, or to our re-

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generation and sanctification, which are much greater and by far more noble than even our creation itself.

§ 2. Wherefore it was necessary that the Son of God should take human nature on him, to recover all that which was lost in Adam, and to revive all that which was dead in him, and to raise up all that which was fallen. Which, that it may be brought to effect, we must imitate the traveller who is cruelly handled, and wounded, and laid upon the ground, and not able to help himself; him therefore the Samaritan takes up, and binds up his sores, and then lays him upon a horse, leads him into the stable, and after that omits nothing which an industrious and faithful physician can administer to a sick person. And as the traveller also shews himself obedient to his physician, and strictly observes his direction and command; so let us remember to do the like, if we desire to be healed: Let us do our full diligence, and with all our power follow the advice of our physician Christ; let us resign ourselves wholly up unto him; let us trust in his faith, that he will bind up and cure our wounds; let us leave him to pour in both wine and oil into them; and he will not be wanting, nor fail to restore us to our former health: that is, as soon as a sinner repents, and converts himself by heavenly grace to God, and is grieved from his heart for his sins, and is willing that his wounds should be washed in the sharp wine of contrition, and after that to be anointed with the oil of consolation; then presently Christ, by his grace, works in him, and brings forth faith, and therewith the fruits of faith; which are a divine righteousness, life, peace, joy, consolation, and salvation; renews him after his own divine image, and "worketh in him to will and finish, according to his good will."

§ 3. For seeing that the abundance of sins are greater than human nature can bear, as witnesses the scripture, which pronounces the natural man the *servant of sin*, and *sold under sin*, and one that can do nothing but sin, according to that of the prophet: "If the Ethiopian can change his hue, or the Leopard his spots, then you can do well, and forget to do evil:" Therefore the singular grace of God has appeared to all men by his gos-

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pel, "teaching us (by the word of his apostle Paul) that denying all impiety and worldly desires, we may live a righteous and sober life in this present world." Which is as if he should say, by the word of God, grace is offered unto us, and by means thereof does instruct, enlighten, allure, and teach us heartily to desist from all sin. Which teaching concerning divine grace, or joint admonition, by the word and spirit, consents with the inward testimony of conscience; whereby man, both from without and within, is convicted that he does evil, and is found guilty of leading a life against the way of God, and against his own conscience, and how he ought thence to change it to a better. Let him know this, if he would be saved.

§ 4. Furthermore, if he will bend his ears and mind, and will look to God alone, as the Author of his salvation, and so being full of good hope, denounce war against vice; then shall the grace of God work all things in man, as faith, charity, and all the fruits of faith. For as darkness cannot lighten itself, and the sun not shining we in vain open our eyes: so neither can man enlighten himself, according to that of the Psalmist, "For thou wilt light my candle: The Lord my God will enlighten my darkness."

§ 5. But divine grace, or Christ himself, is the clear light which is risen to all men sitting in darkness, and in the shadow of death, which enlightens every man that comes into this world; that is, by manifesting himself, and offering his grace; he, I say, is the light of the world, shewing to all men the way of life; and like a good shepherd, guiding his flock into the right way, he sought us as his lost sheep, and daily even now seeks us, and allures us; nay, what is more, follows us and embraces us after the manner of a bridegroom following his bride, or spouse that he loves: Whose grace I would to God most men did not refuse, and give repulse to his love, by preferring the darkness of sin before his light. And even as a physician says to his patient, beware of this, if you will not die; for you hinder the efficacy of the medicine, so that you cannot be made whole: So Jesus Christ, the true Physician of our souls,

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says, "My son, I pray thee incline thy mind to repentance, and leave thy sins, and utterly forsake them all, for most certainly the honour of my merit shall profit thee nothing, when thou thyself art an hinderance; so that either my grace cannot be sown in thee, or else cannot increase in strength, and bring forth fruit. Truly, for this very cause I gave my apostles in charge, before all things, to preach up repentance: And I myself called sinners also to repentance; because an impenitent heart can never participate of my merits." Which speech, when a sick person hears from the Physician of souls, thereby he is moved to abstain from all sin, as fearing that else he must utterly perish; then the word of God coming expressly to his mind, lets him know this, that it is most certain, that God has promised remission of sins to all men freely and without price; but under this law and condition, if they will repent and turn themselves to God, according to that of Ezekiel, "If the wicked shall repent him of his sins, he shall live the life, and not die: All the offences which he hath done, shall not be imputed unto him:" Wherein we see that the repentance of sins is inseparably joined to remission; neither does Christ, the Son of God, in any other sense, promise life eternal to those that believe in him: For faith always opposes itself to the old man, always tames the flesh, and always subjects it to the Spirit; that is, it converts the man, it roots up sin, and it clears and purges the heart, as that which is the fountain of all evil. Verily, this is true faith, I say, that turns itself from the world, from sin, and from the devil to Christ; and seeks comfort and rest for his soul against the grievous debt of his sins, only in the blood, death and merit of Jesus Christ, without the works of himself, or of any man whatsoever.

§ 6. What man is so foolish, as to believe that his sins may be pardoned of God, although he do not desist from his sins? Can any man be so absurd as this? If any one yet can be so deluded, this man undoubtedly has a false faith: Neither shall he ever obtain everlasting life, unless he first repent. The example of this doctrine is most plainly set forth by Zaccheus the pub-

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lican, who understood the doctrine of faith and conversion in a sound sense, as acknowledging that only for true faith, by which man is turned from his sins to God, and so expects and hopes for the remission of sins from Christ, and desires to participate of his merit: to obtain which, it behoves him, in the first place, to give over sinning, and then, in firm trust of the divine grace, to cleave to the free bounty and love of Christ. So he understood the sermon of our Lord, *Repent, and believe the gospel:* that is, desist from sin; be filled with the good hope of my merits, and expect the forgiveness of sins from me only. Wherefore Zaccheus says to Christ, "Behold, Lord, I give half of my goods unto the poor: and if I have defrauded any man of any thing, I restore it four fold." By which words he does not at all commend his works, but extols God's grace; by which it was given him to understand the way of true repentance. Therefore this sense may his prayer have; "O Lord, I am so grieved that I have circumvented and defrauded my neighbour, that I will not only restore unto him four fold, but will bestow likewise half my goods on the poor. Wherefore, Lord, seeing that I confess my sins, and likewise do fully purpose in my mind to leave my sins, and do firmly believe in thee, I do meekly pray and beseech thee to pardon me, and vouchsafe to circumvent and surround me with thy grace." Which lawful form of conversion, the heavenly physician allowing and receiving, answers, "This day is salvation come unto thy house. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost." And this is true repentance and upright conversion by faith which God works, who is thereof the beginning, the middle, and the ending. So that no other thing is indeed required of us, but a will not to resist the will of God, or voluntarily not to resist and oppose the holy Ghost, after the manner of those stubborn and refractory Jews, of whom mention is made in the apostolical acts, wherein we read of some whom St. Paul reproaches in this manner, "It behoveth us first to speak unto you the word of God: but because you reject it, and judge

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yourselves unworthy of eternal life; behold we turn unto the Gentiles." It is our part and duty therefore, after the manner of the sick, to take the advice of the physician, and to obey his precepts and prescriptions; and as he in the beginning of the disease searches into the causes and symptoms of it, and narrowly examines the patient: even so God lays open our sins, as he does to the sick, and gently admonishes us what things are to be avoided, that his medicines may exert their full strength: so God shews us what is to be declined, or avoided, lest the medicine of his most precious blood be made void, and work in us nothing at all.

§ 7. Moreover, as a man by the grace of the Holy Ghost forbears to sin, immediately hereupon the divine grace begins in him to work; who before, and without this, could make no beginning, nor was sufficient of himself to think any good thought, much less to do any good deed. But from thence forward, the good that is in the convert, is not his own, but comes merely of divine grace, according to that of St. Paul, "I speak by the grace that is given me." And again, "By the grace of God I am that I am:" And to us that follow the prescriptions, grace is freely imputed with the whole merit, and full obedience of Christ, no otherwise than if it were our own, so we be but penitent. For neither does imputation, lest we err, belong to the wicked, and the contemners of the word of God; neither does Christ work but in the penitent. And even as a schoolmaster guiding the hand of a child whom he teaches to write, then praises his writing; so God, who works in us, crowns and commends those things. *Without me*, saith Christ, *ye can do nothing* that is good; and we are apt by nature, without him, to do the things that are evil; and this only is proper to us: but that which is good is mere grace, neither has flesh any thing whereof to boast. Therefore blessed and happy are you, if you give your minds to forbear sinning, and consent to God, even as a young virgin that gives her promise and faith to her bridegroom that embraces her. And Christ truly, the bridegroom of our souls, endeavours to manifest in us, that he on his part is willing; and consents by call-

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ing us so courteously to him both in his word and in our conscience, by seeking us, by alluring us, and by embracing us. Wherefore let us desist from sin, lest his precious blood be spilt in vain for us.

CHAP. XXXV.

Without a holy and christian Life, all Wisdom, all Arts and Sciences, yea, the Knowledge of the whole Scripture, and all Theology, is in vain.

MATT. vii. 21.—*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven.*

§ 1. BECAUSE in charity are contained all the duties of a christian man, and all the life of Christ was nothing but most pure love; hence St. Paul, under the name of charity, comprehends the whole life of a christian. Now it is the property of charity to respect God alone in all things, and not to have the least respect to his own honour or interest; but in all things to act generously and disinterestedly for God's sake, because God is the chief good; and to do all purely for his honour, and for the good of one's neighbour. Which charity, whoever has not, is a hypocrite: And if any man say, that he loves God, when in his works he respects more his own advantage than God's glory, it appears plainly to be a false love which he boasts of, and he cannot be a true christian, whatever he may pretend. Therefore let this man understand the holy Bible never so well, let him have it all without book, yea, let him speak also with the tongue of angels; yet all these things shall profit him nothing, but he shall be *as sounding brass*. For as no food can nourish the body, unless it be turned into juice and blood, so also the word of God and the sacraments of Christ are to no purpose, if they be not expressed in our life.

§ 2. Nor is the new man any other than a man holy, and full of charity. Thence St. Paul says, "If I could

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prophesy, and know all mysteries, and all knowledge, and all faith, so that I might remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing;" that is, if I should pursue mine own honour under them, and expect any thing besides the honour of God, and the good of my neighbour. And therefore all such are an abomination, and are accursed before Almighty God, according to that saying of our Lord, "Many shall say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and cast out devils in thy name, and have done many miracles in thy name? And then I shall say unto them, because I know you not, depart from me, ye workers of iniquity;" in that you have not respected me sincerely, but rather yourselves. Of the like mind is St. Paul, "If I should give all I have unto the poor, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." For what is this charity? even that love which shews liberality for God's sake alone, and not for our own praise, or for lucre and interest. Such was the righteousness of the Pharisees, who offered many sacrifices, and drew on others that they might adorn their temples with their magnificent gifts, and offer costly offerings, the slavery of which ambition drew them to forget the offerings of the poor; which last ought rather to be preferred, and that out of pity alone. Which preposterous charity and devotion in them, Christ upbraids, saying, "Wo unto you, scribes and pharisees, hypocrites; for ye devour widows houses, and for a pretence make long prayers, therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation."

§ 3. In which perverse religion of theirs, there are now many followers, who bequeath large legacies to temples and to monasteries, that they who enjoy those revenues, may make long prayers for them; which truly is false love: they seeking herein themselves; not respecting the divine honour, but their own. But we who pretend to be reformed, and who are taught to live righteously by faith, let us rather be inwardly and heartily penitent, and offer ourselves up to God, by mortifying our affections, and crucifying our flesh; and do all our works of charity, not out of self-love, nor for the cause of praise or profit whatever; but let us do them

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for the sincere love of God; being sure, that if we do them otherwise, they will not avail us one hair of our head. Therefore, although you give your body to be burned, and want this love which is due to God alone, and seek not purely his praise and honour, you indeed do nothing. Neither do they profit themselves any more, who whip and torture their bodies, by humbling and afflicting their souls, as the prophet speaks; because they are conceited thence of their singular sanctity, and effect their own praises: and that they may set forth their presumptuous religion, in their private judgment and will-worship, do not respect God, but applause, or popular estimation, whereby many of them are so blinded, being delivered up to a spirit of delusion, as they make no doubt to suffer themselves to be burned for the defence of their conceived opinion; thinking that they thereby become the martyrs of Christ; when yet they do not serve Christ, but themselves; it is not the punishment, but the cause, which makes a martyr. Such martyrs as these, the devil has had even amongst the heathens; many of whom were so blinded in their understandings that they were contented to die for their altars and idols. And the same is done at this very day amongst us christians, under the specious shew of the christian faith. And as the heathens, to gain an immortal name, persuaded themselves they did well in so doing; even so, for self-love and glory, there are like unto them certain monks, and other seeming devout persons in our age, who, for the cause of propagating their religion, will persuade princes that they are to do the like, and even die for what they please to call the catholic cause: whose madness is so much the more manifest, because they believe that they suffer for Christ's cause, and so become his martyrs, when contrariwise, they become the martyrs of Roman bishops, and of their own private renown and praise. And thus much of coated or cloaked charity, to which man is seduced and carried on by a false light.

§ 4. It remains therefore firm, that without the sincere love of God and our neighbour, and a holy and christian life, all arts, sciences, faculties, profit nothing:

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Wisdom, how great soever, yea, if it be as great, or greater than that which was in Solomon, is nothing; the knowledge of the whole scripture, and universal theology, is nothing: Lastly, all works whatsoever, and martyrdom itself, if you will so call it. For to know the will of God, and his word, and not to live after the prescript or rule thereof, only augments the guilt of future damnation, according to that of our blessed Lord, "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had had no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin."

CHAP. XXXVI.

How and by whom the Virtue of the hidden Manna is tasted.

REV. ii. 17.—*To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.*

§ 1. HEREBY it appears, that no man does or can taste the inward sweetness of the heavenly joy and comfort hidden in the word of God, who does not first overcome his own flesh and the world, with all the lusts and corruptions thereof, and the temptations of satan. But they who crucify their own flesh daily, by their serious contrition and repentance, with all the desires and concupiscence thereof, who die to themselves and the world daily, and to whom this life is a mere cross; are divinely fed with heavenly manna, and drink the nectar of paradise. Contrariwise, those that follow none but worldly pleasure, render themselves by this means incapable to taste the hidden manna. For like things (according to the proverb) are delighted in their like; and seeing then that the word of God is spiritual, it is no marvel therefore, if worldly minds be not at all delighted with it. For even as the body receives no strength from the food which the stomach has not digested, so the soul from the divine word, or manna, receives no strength or nutriment, unless it be converted into itself,

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that is, into life. Yea, as a man sick of a fever distastes all things, and complains that they are bitter to him: So those also that are sick of the worldly fever, that is, of the love of the world, loathe the word of God, and distaste it as if it were bitter. But on the contrary, those that have the Spirit of God, find in it the hidden manna, and secret sweetness, which is never to be tasted by them that are carried away with the world; which is the cause that many, by the daily hearing of the gospel, feel little desire, and receive little spiritual joy. And the case is plain, they are not led by the Spirit of God, but by the spirit of the world; nor have they heavenly, but earthly minds.

§ 2. But he that will fully and soundly understand, and savour the word of God, and feed upon manna, ought to study to conform all his life to it, and to follow Christ. Which being done, Christ feeds the humble with grace, satisfies the poor, and comforts the meek, and makes his yoke pleasant, and his burden light to them. For the sweetness of the heavenly manna cannot be tasted but under the yoke of Christ; according to that which is written, "He will fill the hungry with good things, and send the rich empty away." And again, "The words that I have spoken are spirit and life," says Christ; whereupon it follows, that a voluptuous and carnal heart, or a man that has no spiritual understanding or relish, cannot possibly understand or relish these things.

§ 3. For in spirit, in rest, in silence, in peace, with great humility, and holy and vehement desire, is the word of God to be received and to be digested. Which if it be not converted into life, then truly it is no better than the external letter, and an empty sound of words. For even as he that hears the noise of a harp only, or a song, and understands it not, nor distinguishes the melody of it, receives no pleasure by it: So no man can be partaker of the virtue that is in the word, unless he endeavour to express it in his life, and to be thoroughly conformed to it in spirit. And this is that which was said before, "I will give thee a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, but

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he that hath it." This is, that which is a testimony of the hidden spirit, which he, whose name is the Word, gives to the word of God. And in like manner, the spirit of the word gives testimony to our spirit, whereby both conspire and unanimously consent together, and so become one spirit; which is that new name that is unknown to all but to the receiver. For as no man knows the sweetness of honey, but he that tastes it; so the name of the divine testimony in the hearts of the godly, no man knows but he that proves it. This man then only knows the heavenly consolations, and divine visitations; because he perceives them sensibly, and they are tasted by him most really: whose name is also called *new*, because these gifts are the works and fruits of the *new birth*.

§ 4. Blessed now is the man to whom God has thus given himself to be so tasted in his heart; blessed are the prophets whom from the beginning of the world he has fed with his bread that is so heavenly, and cherished and supported by the conference of his eternal word: And because it was so done unto them, therefore they, out of a lively sense, inward feeling, and powerful experience, have spoken of it, and thence composed the holy scriptures. And in truth, even at this very day he speaks also to all men, and feeds them inwardly with his word in the soul: But almost all men have shut their ears against his voice, and had rather hear the world than God, and be driven, by their own spirit, and the lusts thereof, than by the Spirit of God. Wherefore it comes to pass, that they cannot taste the hidden living manna, since they both greedily swallow, in the mean time, the apples of the tree of death, (even their carnal lusts) and contemn the tree of life with the fruit thereof. But surely such men are not a little mad; though they understand that God can give greater, transcendently greater pleasures to his lovers, than the world, yet they slight the offer. To him now that has once tasted the goodness of God, the whole world, with all the pleasures of it, will seem as mere gall and bitterness.

§ 5. Now seeing we know how our first progenitors were beguiled with the world, and how, by eating of the

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forbidden tree, they have acquired death, both for themselves and us; we cannot surely be so blind and mad, as to be content to be fed with carnal pleasures, that are so dearly bought, and to swallow the morsels of death eternal. *If any shall eat of me*, saith Christ, the true tree of life, and true bread of life, *he shall live forever*. And what is it to eat of him, but to believe in him, to rejoice in him, to take delight in him, and to rest and take pleasure in him alone? Great therefore, O mortals, is the blindness, to serve the world for trifles, for vain and frail things, with such affection and earnestness, and not to do the same for God, who rewards his worship and service with eternal good things, and far more noble and excellent benefits. For who is there that performs and pays to God so much faith, loyalty, obedience, and diligence, as the vulgar worldlings perform and pay to mammon and the world? We see them many times for small matters, or for a little money, make long journies; and for the sake of heaven, it grieves us but to move a foot. Hereupon the holy prophets reproach Tyre and Sidon, with most emphatical upbraidings, for their taking in hand vast journies and navigations for the advancement of their earthly concerns, when in the mean time they would not vouchsafe for the sovereign Good itself, to change their place. And that in our time, men of all sorts and conditions, do in like manner prefer the world before God, is, I think, a thing most manifest. Hence we see many doctors study day and night to attain to honour and preferment in the world; who hardly (or not at all) will take so much leisure as suffices to say aright, and from true ground, the Lord's Prayer, to attain the eternal honours and celestial dignities, if they were to be attained with so little labour. So also you see the very men who avoid no labour to get the bread that perishes, are for undergoing none to get that which is incorruptible. You shall see too, them that are afraid of no difficulty, and flee from no danger, here shew themselves most base and timorous: You may see how others scorn to give back, and boldly stare death in the face, being commanded to serve in an earthly warfare, that

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they may attain but thereby to a little vanishing fame and honour; and yet they will not enter into the combat with their own vices, although they may attain the heavenly nobility by it. Moreover, ye shall see that the victors of many nations, and subduers of vast kingdoms, do not care much for overcoming themselves; and that infinite numbers do not regard the loss of their souls, and deprivation of eternal happiness, to attain to frail and momentary goods. All these have not tasted the hidden manna of the divine word; and therefore do not overcome the world, but are overcome of the world; which whoever dares contemn in respect of God, truly finds the most sweet visits of the Holy Ghost, and is filled with heavenly pleasure which no man knows or can know, but he that receives it.

§ 6. This therefore is to be done: the tree of life is first to be planted in us, that we may eat the fruit thereof: and our heart, that wishes to be recreated with the celestial consolations, ought first to be converted from the world to God. But we being made drunk with worldly pleasures, and so prodigiously therewith bewitched, do not, alas! incline our hearts and minds, to think that the heavenly and divine joys are rather to be wished for than those which the world offers or affords. Ah! how apt are we to believe the world, and take what it offers us; although that is infinitely more true and real, that God offers and does, and is incomparably more noble, than that which the creatures bring to pass. Wherefore also the learning which comes from above, by the inspiration of the holy Ghost, is much more excellent than that other which human understanding, with so great labour and toil, obtains. For as an apple, or a lily, produced by nature, is far more noble, and much better, than that which a workman makes of gold, be the gold never so fine; even so one drop of divine consolation is more noble, and by many, yea infinite, degrees better than a whole ocean of worldly pleasures. All which are to be slighted by one that desires the divine consolations. If any will hear me, let him lend me his ears; if any will understand me, let him attend to what I say; and if any will see me, sure

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it behoves him to fix his eyes upon me: who then doubts that all our hearts and senses ought to be converted to God, and fixed on God, if we desire to see, hear, and understand God, and to taste and prove how good he is? According to that which he has so solemnly declared, saying, "When ye shall seek me with your whole heart, I will be found of you."

§ 7. Many at this day are had in admiration: Oh! a learned man, a rich man, a great man, a wise man; but few regard how meek, how humble, how patient, and how devout any man is: of which perverse judgment there is no other cause, than that men attend and admire outward things, and in the mean time with blind eyes pass by the inward, which are only worthy to be esteemed and had in admiration by all. He that praises a man because he has seen many cities, and far situated regions; let him examine if it were not far better to have seen God. He that values another, because he serves an earthly monarch, I would have him think whether it were not more excellent and noble to be the servant of God, the king of heaven, and to have served God and Christ faithfully with all the heart. Many of those that are infatuated with the mere love of the world, prefer this present age, as if it were the only learned and wise, before all antiquity: These do not know the art of arts, and science of sciences, which is divine love, more noble than all knowledge and learning, to be extinct in a manner, together with faith, according as has been foretold, and few to remain divinely learned or taught of God, and that have been instructed by Christ in the humble and lowly life. Yea, to speak the truth, the most learned at this day, for the most part, are void of divine love, and do not know so much as what true life is in Christ: These circumscribe knowledge in the circle of words, when indeed solid learning is a *thing*, and not words; is somewhat real and substantial, and consists in eternal and true wisdom: Of which wisdom we have spoken more at large in the treatise of true and ancient philosophy.

§ 8. Those are also no less ridiculous, who praise any man, because he keeps a stately and plentiful table, and

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fares deliciously; not being mindful that the very crumbs from God's table are transcendently better than the richest dishes of his; and not considering that true dainties is the word of God, and the hidden manna thereof: and that this contains in it the incorruptible bread of heaven; and that he only lives deliciously, in whose presence the Lord has prepared his table. He who savours the Lord God, and relishes his word, is disgusted at nothing, and his palate nothing can displease; for he relishes God in all, and takes all most sweetly as from his hands. But he to whom God is unsavoury, and that has a loathing, as it were, for the good word of life, and is displeased with it, cannot truly rejoice: for God in Christ is the joy of the soul, exceeding all created joys, and the eternal light thereof, infinitely surpassing all temporal light. O would to God that Christ, this eternal word and light, would fill our hearts with his hidden pleasure, would purify our spirits, illuminate our understandings, rectify our wills, clarify and quicken our whole inward man! would to God, I say, that the time were now come, wherein Almighty God, by his presence, would fill us with all those things which he essentially is! Of which, although we be not yet competent, or capable, O may we have in the mean time, what is sufficient for us! And if we are not fit here to enjoy so great delight, grant that we may however enjoy the crumbs which fall from thy table, O Lord, till we shall be translated by thy grace to the joys of eternal life.

§ 9. Hear, O hear the words of our blessed Saviour; "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open to me, I will enter in unto him, and I will sup with him, and he with me." Now what a preposterousness is it, and what an unparalleled rudeness, to neglect this so great a favour, to slight this so great a condescension, to treat so contemptuously the majesty of the King of kings, to reject reproachfully the tender offer of his grace, and to suffer him to stand knocking as without, and not to let him in, though he wait even till his head be filled with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night! O how unaccountable is it not to admit

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him who has prepared us a supper, and who after the manner of a prince coming to his poor friend's house, brings all his royal dainties and the whole supper along with him. He brings, I say, the heavenly bread, and the hidden manna; and is not this a great oversight to let him stand waiting at the door, and not to open readily to him? O! who can resist so sweet a voice, saying, open to me, my love? What incivility would it be not to receive a friend! but not to entertain God himself with all diligence and alacrity, what a madness! Should I tell you the reason why we do not open the door when he knocks? It is because in a house full of noise and clamour, music, though never so excellent, cannot be heard: so neither can the voice of the divine banquetter enter the ears of a worldly heart that is full of hurry and din; and consequently the celestial manna cannot be tasted by such an one. This I take to be the truth. If therefore the worldly tumults and noise in man do not cease, who will doubt but that the Lord shall go away unheard, though he continue for a good while knocking and crying to the soul! O that you with Samuel, could answer, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

§ 10. Moreover, this internal voice speaks to the soul as in a spiritual and heavenly supper. For "those which have been once enlightened, and tasted the heavenly gifts, and have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, they also have tasted the good word of God, and the virtues of the world to come." By which we are taught, that in what man soever the Holy Ghost is, there the virtues and powers of the world to come are tasted. Neither is his mind to be hindered from daily feeding on that manna that is hidden in the sweet and mellifluous divine word which proceeds out of the mouth of God, and is that by which all the saints live. That which the kingly prophet David, by the Holy Ghost, found in his heart and tasted in his mind, when he said, "Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right-hand there are pleasures forevermore." And when he called to others, saying, "O

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fear the Lord, ye his saints; for there is no want to them that fear him." And when he rejoiced in himself with giving of thanks, confessing in this manner, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil, my cup runneth over." Also when he burst out admiring: "Thus will I bless thee, while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name." And again in another psalm; "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house: And thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures." And lastly, when he rejoices in heart, saying, "Let all those that seek thee, rejoice and be glad in thee: and let such as love thy salvation, say continually, let God be magnified. But I am poor and needy, make haste unto me, O God: thou art my help and my deliverer; O Lord, make no tarrying."

§ 11. By all which, beside many other places, it may be known who those are that are inwardly fed and nourished with God's word, and with the hidden manna of the world to come, and the heavenly gifts and virtues; even those that are poor in spirit, and that do in God alone place their whole trust and delight. Those, I say, are worthy to taste of this heavenly manna, and of the divine gift, of whom David thus speaks, "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord, my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God." Whereby one may evidently understand, that the least pleasures of the world to come, do far exceed all the joys of this present world; and that one day there is more excellent and more to be desired, than here to live in worldly pleasure for a whole year, yea, for a thousand years; which heavenly food and joy, whoever has once made trial of, and found to be as it is described, the world brings unto him a loathing and tediousness. Hence, as one that is accustomed to better things, he can relish it no more, but does rather perfectly nauseate it. Hereto appertains that which the eternal wisdom speaks, saying, "My Spirit is sweet above the honey, and my inheritance above the honey and the honey-

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comb. They who eat me, do yet hunger; and they who drink me, do yet thirst." And his hunger and thirst none but God alone can fill, none but he can satisfy with his love, wherewith the saints are made drunk, according to the Canticle of Canticles, "Eat, O friends, drink and be drunk, O my dearest friends." Therefore Almighty God for that purpose makes such delicacies for his dear friends, that they being enamoured with this bait of delight, may forget all worldly pleasures. Now if in this life it be better for us to leave all the pleasures thereof, for but a few little crumbs of hidden manna, and a few drops of divine nectar, and of the heavenly wine, how much more plentiful and abundant then shall that be which we shall, if we are faithful, attain in the other life!

§ 12. That our Saviour might stir up this thirst in us, it was expedient that he should thirst upon the cross. For even as he alone can staunch our hunger and thirst, so we in like manner can restrain his most flagrant desire of loving. He thirsts after us more vehemently than we thirst after him, according as he has said, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, that I may finish his work." For what is the will of God, which was his constant food, and that which he so hungered after, but that we may attain eternal life? and if we did equally thirst after him, as he thirsts after us, then of a truth should we drink of and be inebriated with his Spirit, most liberally and sweetly, so that out of our bodies would flow rivers of living water: that is, there should be nothing in us that should not be spiritual, amiable, comely; nay, no otherwise than if we were filled and made to overflow as from a torrent of divine goodness and consolation; we in our whole mind and conversation, both inwardly and outwardly, should triumphantly rejoice in God. For nothing is of more account with God than the human soul, or greater than it, when it conceives God, and comprehends heaven and earth, by way of enjoyment freely: and nothing less than it, when it humbles itself before God, and casts itself below all creatures. "Let him that is athirst, come: And who-

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soever will, let him drink here of the water of life freely. Let him that is hungry, come: And whosoever will, let him feed also of the bread of life most freely. Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved."

CHAP. XXXVII.

CHRIST THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

Declaring how those that do not follow Him in their Life, cannot be freed from the Blindness of their Hearts; but must remain in Darkness, without the Light of Life: And so can have no true Knowledge of, or Fellowship with God.

1 John i. 5, 6, 7.—*God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all; if we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and are not in the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.*

§ 1. RIGHTLY to understand the nature of light and darkness, it is needful to have first the definition, or description of the light, as it is originally.

God is *light*, says St. John. But what is God? God is a spiritual, eternal, and infinite being; God is almighty, merciful, gracious, righteous, holy, true, faithful, all-knowing, and only wise; God is unspeakable love and faithfulness; he is the most sovereign good, and all good essentially; and the true and everlasting light. Whence every one that departs from God, departs from the light; and whosoever walks not in his love, his mercy, his righteousness, and his truth, the same walks not in his light, but wanders out from it, and falls into darkness. For without God, there is nought but darkness, but mere darkness, but everlasting darkness. O how dark therefore is that soul in which God is not!

§ 2. Now if God be light, then the devil is *darkness*: and if God be love, then also the devil is hatred; which hatred is sown in the darkness, even as love is sown in

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the light, and springs up out of the light; so extinguishing the powers of darkness. For this heavenly love having light everlasting for its sun, and its shield, is stronger than death and hell; and sin and torment must flee before it, as they spring up out of the darkness into which they are sown. Wherefore as God is light, yea, very light; and Christ is light of light, and very light of very light: even so the devil is as truly said to be darkness, yea, very darkness; and antichrist to be darkness of darkness, and very darkness of very darkness, in the children of disobedience, who bear the image of the wicked one. And consequently he, even Satan, is all wrath and envy, all malice and uncharitableness, and in him is no light at all; and they that walk in the darkness, as he is in the darkness, have fellowship with him, and joint-fellowship with the inhabitants of the darkness, being made partakers of his nature, and wearing his form. And certainly, if God be in his nature charity, the devil is in his nothing but self-love, the fruitful womb of sin and torment. To which whoever joins himself, (namely, wrath and arrogance, envy and hatred, malice and revenge, with a numerous train besides) the same is changed into darkness and the devil, and has the vile form of the serpent in his soul. From which there is no deliverance for him, without a total renovation of nature, and a thorough transformation and transplantation. No man, I say, can hence be delivered, before he shall be converted from darkness to light, from sin to righteousness, and from the devil to God. And this must be the work of faith alone, whereby our hearts are purified. For whoever believes in Christ, repents daily, and turns from sin; that is, from the devil to Christ. For even as Adam by sin converted himself from God to the devil, so it behoves every one of us to flee by true repentance and faith from the devil to God, and from darkness to light.

§ 3. Now it follows hence that man, without returning to God, which is light, cannot be enlightened. "For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? Or what place of society is there for light and darkness?"

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This darkness is unrighteousness, but light is the true knowledge of Jesus Christ, which can no ways therewith enter into fellowship: So that it is absolutely impossible that those should be enlightened by the Spirit and light of eternal truth, who live in the darkness of unrighteousness. To which appertains the saying of St. Paul concerning the Jews, "When they shall be converted to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away;" that is, their darkness, blindness, and ignorance shall cease, and Christ shall enlighten them.

§ 4. For what greater blindness, or thicker mist can cover the minds of men, than infidelity, with the fruits thereof; such as pride, covetousness, wrath, and lust; therefore where these be, it cannot come to pass that a man should truly acknowledge Christ the true light; or that he should know him, until he believe in him, confide in him, and give up himself to be saved by him. For how shall he understand the humility of Christ, whose mind knows not himself through pride? Or how shall he know the meekness of Christ, that is altogether full of wrath and envy? Or how shall any understand his exceeding wonderful patience, who rejoices in revenge, and imitates the savage beasts in cruelty? But whoever understands not the lowliness, humility, meekness, and patience of Christ, he never knows Christ, but is a stranger to him, and lives not by his faith. For truly and rightly to know him, it behoves you by faith, to have the heart and understanding of Christ in you, and to perceive his meekness, patience, and humility within you in your heart. Since as a plant is known by the taste and smell, so Christ, the tree of life, by tasting and by sensible trial, is understood and perceived: Even by tasting in faith his lowliness and humility, his meekness and patience: and by eating of his fruit, that is, of his love and peace, whereby your soul may find rest and tranquillity, and be made capable more and more, of divine favour and consolation. Whereas grace and comfort, into a heart that is void of faith, and unfenced with the humility of Christ, cannot enter to fructify; seeing that God gives grace only to the humble.

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§ 5. Since then it is thus, What does Christ profit a man who has no society with him? Such are all those who, living in the darkness of sin, cannot be companions of the light, according to that of St. John, "If we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we are liars, and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have joint fellowship with him." And in the following chapter he adds, "The darkness is past, and the true light now shineth: He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother, abideth in the light, and there is no offence in him, no occasion of stumbling, or scandal in him. But he that hateth his brother, is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because the darkness hath blinded his eyes."

§ 6. And as long as a man remains in that terrible cloud of sin, he cannot be lightened by Christ, who is the true light; nor come to the knowledge of God. For the true knowledge of God, and of Christ, consists in that a man understand God to be mere grace and charity: which knowledge whoever has not, or having it, exercises not the acts that bear a resemblance hereof; this man knows, with the most ignorant, what this charity is. For all knowledge consists in, and arises out of the understanding, the experience, and the works of truth: And most certain it is, that he who hence does not exercise charity, however he may make many words about it, yet he perceives not the perfect nature of it, and so is ignorant of God, and unacquainted with Christ. For,

§ 7. Christ is mere love, humility, meekness, patience, and every virtue; which whoever has not, is ignorant of Christ, though he can finely prattle many things of him, and for a cover usurp his name. Now after the same manner the word of God is nothing but spirit: whence they who live not in the spirit, do not know what the word of God is, although they prate never so much of the scriptures, and dispute about them every where. And in like manner, it belongs not to a man to judge of love, who exercises it not; or of the

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word of God who has not the taste of it in his soul. For all knowledge, as was said, begins with sensation and experience. Nor is it his part to discourse of the light, who never has once moved a foot out of his own darkness to see the light: And what is light in man, but faith and charity?—according to the saying of Christ, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

§ 8. Now seeing that the most holy life of Christ is nothing else but mere love, if we endeavour to draw from him true faith, humility, meekness, and patience, according as it is given in commandment to us by the strict law of his holy discipline, then truly we are transformed into his image, and we are beautified and adorned with his love, no otherwise than if we were covered and clothed with Christ himself, who is the eternal and true light, according to that of the apostle, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ will enlighten you."

§ 9. Whereupon it follows again, that as many as do not awake from the sleep of the world, that is, from the lusts of the eyes, and of the flesh, and from the pride of life, their souls cannot truly be illuminated by Christ; and that they on the other side, who take upon them the life of Christ, and follow him in faith, are illuminated, according to that of the gospel, "I am the light of the world, he who followeth me," in faith, charity, hope, patience, meekness, humility, fear of God, and life of prayer, "walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life." As if he should say, only those that imitate me have the light of life, and the true illumination and knowledge of God. By reason of the same faith and life of Christ, or christian life, it is that St. Paul calls the faithful by the name of light; "Ye were (saith he) sometimes darkness, but now light in the Lord." And again, "Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: We are not of the night; nor darkness; having put on the breast-plate of faith, and love, and the helmet of salvation." To this belongs that of the book of wisdom, which says, that the Holy Ghost

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flees wicked persons, but comes into holy souls, and of them makes prophets, and friends of God. Which if it flee the wicked, it is plain that the wicked cannot be enlightened by it. To which that also is parallel, that Christ denies the world (that is, carnal minds that have a worldly bias) to be capable to receive the Holy Ghost, the spirit of truth.

§ 10. But that there might be a perfect and absolute example amongst men, and an idea and platform of virtue, therefore the Son of God became the Son of man, and by his most holy life was made the public light of the world, that so all men might follow him, believe in him, and be illuminated by him. Though false christians themselves know and acknowledge Christ to be the most perfect and absolute righteousness, and the great exemplar of virtue; yet are not for following him, it is manifest, that the very heathens go far beyond them. For the heathens, while they knew him not, having a love for virtue, were hereby made more like him, than great numbers of them that pretend highly to the knowledge of him by the gospel; and so put to shame those pretended christians, who, notwithstanding they are convinced that Christ is virtue itself, or the most pure and perfect virtue, and most consummate righteousness, yet copy not after him in their lives. And therefore shall these in the day of judgment rise up and condemn the generation of them that say they are christians, but are not; as who by their manner of living, give the lie to Christ, whose disciples they would seem to be; but while they confess him in words, do renounce him in deeds; being alienated from the life of Christ, and strangers even to that virtue which they so much admired, loved, and honoured, as that which was heaven-born, and descended from God.

§ 11. Whence the wisest of heathens, such as Socrates and Plato, Cicero and Seneca, Epictetus and Antoninus, have said, "That if virtue could but be seen by the eyes of the body, it would appear more beautiful than the poets have feigned Venus, and fairer than the morning star." And they that have indeed seen Christ, that is, have looked upon him with the eye of faith, these

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have seen this fairest morning-star, this light of heavenly beauty, this charming splendour of virtue, the beauty of beauties, the virtue of virtues, and the unspotted mirror of righteousness. These have by faith seen and 'handled the word of life; and having seen and had this experience, behold how they are even ravished with the love of Christ's life, and so enamoured with the beauty of his holiness, as to seek above all things, how they may sanctify in themselves the name of the Lord their righteousness, he being made to them both sanctification and redemption! Wherefore we are admonished by the Holy Ghost, always to look unto Jesus, as both the beginner and finisher hereof in us; resisting with him even unto blood, and striving against all sin, that he may be glorified in us.

§ 12. Seeing that the very heathens have such an high esteem and veneration for virtue, and were so much in love with it, as if it were the most super-excellent beauty that human nature could be made capable of; what esteem and veneration ought christians to have for it, and how much rather in love ought they to be with it, since it is now made so exceedingly lovely and beautiful in him whom they have taken for the exemplar of their life? And if they so much desired to see it, who had not that peculiar advantage which we have, and were so charmed with but a little imperfect glimpse of it, as to prefer it infinitely before all worldly beauty; how much more ought christians to desire to see it, to wish to have it made visible in themselves, and to esteem and love it above all things, who have it set before them in the manifested glory of the only begotten Son of God, by his most heavenly life upon earth! For if virtue is to be loved, and even loved as it is *in itself*, how much more ought a christian to be in love with it, as it is *in Jesus Christ!* In him is all the beauty of virtue, and the loveliness of grace displayed most fully, that of his fulness we may be made to partake, and so become most beautiful and graceful in bearing some part of his likeness. Is virtue lovely? He is mere virtue. Is love charming? He is mere love. Is truth commanding? He is mere truth. Is beauty amiable? He is mere

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beauty. In him righteousness incarnated itself, and all the graces were in him embodied. These must also take as it were a body in us; and he must be made our righteousness by his dwelling in us, that we may behold his beauty reflected upon us, in a conversation like unto his. Impossible therefore it is for us to exceed in our love and esteem for virtue; seeing that Christ is virtue itself, and love itself, yea, God himself.

§ 13. Not without cause did St. Paul prefer the love of Christ before all sciences, and with him we ought therefore to pray that we may experimentally *know* this *love of Christ which passeth* all natural *knowledge* and learning, that we may thereby be *filled with all the fulness of God in Christ*, Eph. iii. 19. Now there is no man that has the love of Christ in him, but he loves the meekness and patience of Christ, and out of most sincere love towards him, embraces his lowliness and humility. By which means he is still further illuminated, and is day by day transformed into the very image of Christ, as from glory to glory. And the reason is evident; forasmuch as love attracts what it loves, and God delights also to give grace to the humble, according as St. Peter witnesses: With whom that notable saying of St. Bernard, *Flumina gratiæ deorsum, non sursum fluunt*, agrees very well. *The floods of grace*, says he, *flow downwards, not upwards:* They visit and renew the valley, but will not rest upon the mountain, or upon any thing that is lifted up. How then shall the grace of the light and knowledge of God come unto a man that walks not in the holy life of Christ, but in the way of Lucifer? So by all this it comes to pass, that the grace of God is lost, or of no effect, to as many as follow not Christ in their lives, and copy not after him in a most righteous and humble conversation; since the love of Christ, which is the magnet of the divine fulness that is in him, is to imitate Christ, and the grace which is received by humility flees away from pride. Nor are the streams of the knowledge of Christ communicated to him that lives not in Christ but walks in the path of the devil: But he that lives in Christ, shall be plentifully refreshed therewith; and shall bring forth thereby much

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fruit in faith, to the glory of Christ. For if there be faith in us, this faith, and faith's fruit and offspring, will not leave us "barren or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

§ 14. In humility Christ lives, and the Spirit of Christ is upon the meek, and the little ones. And upon him that has the meek light, the heavenly grace abides; the humble life of Christ dwells in him, the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, and he shall receive of the gifts of the Holy Ghost. Behold the Spirit rests upon such an one, even the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; even as upon Christ himself. For Christ is in the man in whom his light and life are; so that they are the same, he in Christ, and Christ in him. And consequently the gifts and graces of the Divine Spirit must needs be upon such a person, in like manner as they were upon Christ Jesus, according to the prophet Isaiah, "And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, and shall make him of quick understanding (or quick scent) in the fear of the Lord, and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes."

§ 15. Wherefore St. Peter speaks thus to his brethren the Jews, "Repent, (or be renewed in your minds) and and ye shall receive the gifts of the Holy Ghost:" As if he should say, the Spirit of God, which is the true and only illuminator of the heart, rests not but upon those that are faithful to his light, and are resolved to follow the guidance of it, in being renewed after the image of him in whom the fulness thereof did bodily dwell.

§ 16. If any man desire to be set free from the blindness of his heart, and from inner and utter darkness; yea, from the devil, who inhabits the darkness; let him be sure to imitate Christ in faith and true conversion, and in newness of life, by walking in his holy steps. The nearer you are to Christ, the nearer to eternal light: and the nearer to unbelief in Christ you are, so much nearer to darkness and the devil. For even as faith, (or fidelity) Christ, and all the virtues are knit together, so in like manner are faithlessness, (or infideli-

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ty) the devil, and all the vices. They cleave so fast together, that they cannot be separated.

§ 17. Behold with me, the apostles imitating Christ in faith, in contempt of the world, in denying themselves, in renouncing their possessions, and in living for eternity; by which means they attained to this, that they were found fit for the heavenly illumination, and consequently were enlightened and filled with the Holy Ghost. This the rich young man, of whom we read in the gospel, would not do; and therefore he remained still in the darkness of the world, and was not enlightened by Christ to eternal life. "For he that loveth the world, the love of the Father is not in him." And St. John professes also plainly, "That he who loveth not, remaineth in darkness." For nothing is truer than that he who is without love, or faith working by love, is without light. Let him pretend to never so much light or knowledge, he is certainly in darkness, and walketh in darkness: with whom agrees the most experienced Taulerus, who in all his sermons every where shews and admonishes that without the serious and upright exercise of faith, without a course of mortification and self-denial, without recollection and the inward turning of one's self to one's own heart, and without the inward still sabbath of the soul, no man can receive into him divine light, or shall ever find it in himself. In short, as much as the works of darkness, by the Spirit of God in any man, are destroyed after his conversion, so much is he illuminated, and no more; and by how much more powerfully on the other side our corrupt nature, the flesh and the world, in any man, do bear rule, so much more of darkness is in him, and so much less of grace, of light, of spirit, of God, and of Christ, is in him. Therefore it remains firm and stedfast, that without daily and continual repentance and renovation, no man can be truly illuminated.

§ 18. He that will not resist one sin, gives an opportunity thereby to many sins. For there comes always one sin out of another; yea, one grows as out of the other, and by the other, and spreads itself here and there

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like a weed, and brings forth out of itself continually abundant increase, fitted for destruction. When therefore a man has not thoroughly resisted so much as one vice, nor rooted out one evil habit, but brings forth perpetually out of himself the same sins, with no small increase; how great must the darkness of that man be! And as natural darkness ceases not to wax greater and greater, as the sun is departed farther away, even so the farther we are removed from the noble life of Christ, the farther we are from true light; and so much the more do sin and darkness grow still thicker and thicker in us; till at length man is brought by it into an eternal night of darkness.

§ 19. On the contrary, he who resists not the grace of God enters the chariot of virtue with good courage, and firm hope of successful progress: And though he give himself up to perfect one virtue alone, yet he gives thereby an opportunity to many virtues, and cannot but proceed from one to another, and profit in them daily; one of them still following another, as rings are linked one to another in a gold chain: which sweet and admirable connexion is by St. Peter expressed after this manner, namely, how we ought to have care, and to use diligence, by ministering in our faith, virtue; and in our virtue, knowledge; that is, adding virtue to faith, and knowledge to virtue; and then pursuing in knowledge, abstinence; in abstinence, patience; in patience, piety; in piety, brotherly love; in brotherly love, charity; by superadding one of these continually to the other. And if we do these things, and abound therein, then he tells us that we shall not be found empty, nor without fruit, in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. By which we are to understand, that he that holds not this chain, is not linked to Christ; and he that exercises not these virtues, knows not Christ: But he that by faith grows in virtue, grows also in Christ. All others, as the proud, the wrathful, the covetous, the impatient, grow not in Christ, but in the devil. Wherefore, if we hold fast by this chain, and follow the heavenly conduct, then shall we, even as a child, by little and little, grow up in time unto the full stature of a man, grow in faith, and

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by an experimental knowledge of the Son of God in the study of solid virtue, unto perfect men, unto the measure of full age in Christ, or to the stature of fulness in him.

§ 20. But he to whom these things are not ready, or who holds not fast this hidden chain of the apostle, is blind, and is hand-bound; being perfectly forgetful of the purging away of his sins, and unmindful of the divine graces, according as it follows; "He that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." As if he should say, it is certain Christ by his death did bear all our sins; but it is as certain, we must beware that we addict not ourselves to sin hereafter; but rather by the death of Christ fructifying in us, we give all diligence to die to the world, and to live in Christ; which whoever does not, to this man it is plain, that the purging of his old sins can profit nothing; since he has not been diligent enough to make thereby his calling and election sure. According to the advice which is immediately joined with it: "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: For if ye do these things, ye shall never fall."

§ 21. Hence it follows if we desire to have the sins of all our former life remitted, we must for the future forbear to sin, and must truly repent and believe in Christ; which if we do not, we retain all those sins of our former life, and they shall be lamented by us in the world to come, without hope of expiation, or forgiveness. So that it is possible that a man, even for wrath alone, may be damned; which if he had but confessed, and by christian meekness corrected, he had obtained pardon for that, and so for all his other sins, and might have been saved. But because he neglected to do this; therefore according to the words of St. Peter, *he is blind*, being blinded by his own lusts, and forgetful that he was *purged from his old sins.*

§ 22. Whereby it is given us to understand, how necessary repentance is, and a thorough change of life. For although Christ died for our sins, blotting them out, and abolishing them with the incomparable price of his

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most holy blood, yet we do not participate of that merit, unless we repent; without this it profits nothing. And however every man is promised pardon for his sins through the merit of Christ; yet that promise pertains not to the unbeliever, nor to the impenitent, but to those alone who, by faith, amend their lives; and that too, according to the true standard which is set them. For those sins shall not be remitted, which a man will not leave; but those only which he is willing to part with, and which he is heartily grieved for. And to this belongs that which is spoken by the Lord: *The poor receive the gospel;* that is, the remission of sins, and life everlasting.

§ 23. Let us suppose some usurer for many years has been a servant to covetousness, after the example of Zaccheus; or to lust, as Mary Magdalen: or lastly, to wrath and revenge, as Esau: And this man so soon as he has heard these offences were to be left, or else the death and blood of Christ would profit him nothing, becomes a supplicant to God, and cries to him, "Ah, God! how am I grieved for this! O Lord, be merciful, be merciful!"—and then desists from his sins, craves pardon and grace of God, and believes in Christ; then it is most certain, that all his former offences are remitted him out of mere grace, and for no merit of his own; but purely for the death and blood of Christ shed for him. But those that are not fully resolved to shake off, and utterly to detest their wonted covetousness, wrath, usury, pride, and lust; they, because they want that "faith which purifies the heart," from dead works, shall hope forever in vain for the remission of their sins, being condemned to everlasting confusion and torment. For this reason St. Paul so earnestly inculcates, that "they which do such things, shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven." And therefore either the loss of this kingdom must certainly follow, or that narrow way of self-denial must be heartily resolved upon.

§ 24. Now wherever this unfeigned conversion to, and faith in God is wrought in a soul, there is pardon and divine grace ready for her. And where this is, there is Christ also; without whom, no grace can

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be obtained. Where Christ is, there he is accompanied with his precious merit, and the satisfaction he has made thereby for our sins. Again: where this is, there is righteousness; and with righteousness, peace; and with peace, a sweet serenity of conscience. It is then, that "righteousness and peace kiss each other" in such a heavenly soul as the psalmist tells us. This clearness of conscience is attended with the spirit of God himself; which, being a spirit of joy, will certainly pour forth the oil of gladness, and therewith life eternal, which is nothing but joy and glory without end. And this is that eternal light of eternal life, that eternally triumphant joy, wherewith those are crowned only that live in Christ, and do the works of daily repentance: this being the beginning of a spiritual life, as the death of Christ is the basis and foundation whereon it is to be raised. Again: on the contrary, where there is no repentance, there is no pardon of sin; where there is no inward remorse and spiritual sorrow, there no grace can take place: where this is wanting, there Christ himself is wanting, with the whole extent of his merits and satisfaction, let the pretences of the false christian be never so fair and specious. Where this satisfaction is not thoroughly applied to the soul, there is no righteousness neither, and consequently no peace, no good conscience, no comfort, no holy Ghost, no gladness of heart, no calmness of mind; lastly, no life eternal, but death, hell, condemnation, and everlasting darkness. Behold now, O man! how true it is, that none of those who refuse to follow Christ in their lives, by an unfeigned repentance, can ever get rid of the blindness of their hearts, and of everlasting darkness.

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CHAP. XXXVIII.

That an Antichristian Life is generally the Source of false Doctrine, and the original Cause both of Hardness of Heart, and of Blindness of Understanding.

JOHN xii. 35.—*Yet a little while is the light with you: walk ye while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you.*

§ 1. SINCE Christ and faith in him, is, by the corrupt lives of christians, every where renounced, and almost wholly extirpated; what shall then his doctrine profit us? For his doctrine with the word and sacraments, is for no other end delivered unto us, but that it be inwardly digested, and turned, as it were, into our very life and spirit. And as from a good and noble seed, springs up a noble fruit also; even so from the word and sacraments, should spring up within us, that noble principle of regeneration, or of the new birth, or a new, holy, and spiritual man, and, to speak all in a word, a true and real christian. For he that is a christian, must needs be born again out of the Spirit, the word, and the sacrament, and then believe and live in Christ as in the prime and productive principle of the life of grace. As truly as a child is begotten by his father; so truly our soul must be begotten again into a lively hope by means of faith.

§ 2. Now whenever we do not generously resolve to strive against the corrupt bent of our nature, and to digest the doctrine of Christ into life itself; nay, whenever we contradict the doctrine with an antichristian life, with irreligion and profaneness; does not this plainly evidence, and most feelingly convince us, that we are not begotten of God, nor born of Christ? And therefore what will Christ's doctrine profit us, when we are sure our life does not answer it? and will our vain boasts of the light of the gospel do us any good, when it is plain we walk in darkness? For this reason the light is at last deservedly removed from us, and the world overspread with darkness, false doctrines, with errors and

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seducing spirits, Which, that we might beware of, our blessed Saviour has left us this gracious warning: "Whilst ye have light walk in the light, lest darkness come upon you;" that is, lest you be led away into all manner of errors and delusions, into blindness and hardness of heart, into darkness and prejudices, indisposing the mind more and more for the reception of the light of the gospel. This was the unhappy fate which befel Pharaoh, the Jews, and Julian, the apostate; who being in the end convicted by the stinging reproaches of his own conscience, exclaimed openly, and confessed to his own confusion, that Christ did both live and reign, and was Lord and God, saying: (Vicisti) "Thou hast overcome, O Galilean; thou! thou hast overcome!" When it had been better for him to have said, (a Miserere) *have mercy upon me!* But alas! this was now entirely out of his reach, by reason of the hardness of his heart, contracted by an uninterrupted course of sinning, having rejected the mercy of Christ, and despitefully trampled on his most precious blood.

§ 3. And this hardness of heart is that terrible darkness, which in the end overtakes all those that refuse to walk in the light whilst they can have it; and is the punishment inflicted on those that blaspheme the truth, as Pharaoh did, saying: "Who is the Lord that I should hear his voice, and let Israel go? I know not the Lord." Therefore it was just, he should feel more eminently the over-ruling power of God, by being made an example before the whole world, and a lasting monument of the indignation of the Lord, whereby it might appear that man can do nothing against God. In like manner, were the Jews of old struck with blindness and hardness of heart, when they refused to hearken to the voice of the Lord, being told by Moses long before, that this would certainly come to pass: "The Lord, (says he) shall smite thee with madness and blindness, and fury of mind." And so it came actually to pass; witness the prophet Isaiah, chap. vi. 9, 10, 11, 12. Whereby it is manifest, that such hardness of heart is a most just punishment of unbelief, of the contempt of God, and of the heavenly truth declared by him, according to that of

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St. Paul: "With all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that through Christ they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie." By which it is given us to understand why God is wont to permit such blindness and hardness of heart.

§ 3. Moreover, he to whom God either denies, or takes away his grace, this man is most wretched of himself, neither can of himself return again into the way at any time; for which we have the examples of Pharaoh and Julian. For he from whom the Lord takes away his light, lives all his days in darkness. But Almighty God takes the light only from those that will not walk in it; neither takes he his grace away, but from those that have refused it. In which sense St. Paul recounts that oracle of God out of the mouth of Moses; "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy; and I will shew pity on whom I will have pity. Therefore, on whom he will, he hath pity; and whom he will, he hardeneth." But he has pity on all them who acknowledge his mercies; and on the contrary, hardens those that reject and blaspheme his offered grace. And this is that which St. Paul plainly reproves the Jews for, saying, "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you, but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles: And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed:" that is, as many as did not resist and drive from them the word of grace, or the means of faith. Of which contempt, because the Jews were then evidently guilty, therefore they could not believe: For Almighty God has ordained none to eternal life who repel his word disdainfully. Therefore the ordination to life eternal, is fully brought to pass in Christ: So that God offers his grace to all by his gospel; which, they who receive, are ordained to eternal life; and those that cast it behind their backs, do thereby judge themselves, and are consequently judged, unworthy of this eternal life, as St. Paul says; that

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is, by their own fault are made unworthy of that blessing, by exempting themselves from God's universal grace, and so putting their own names out of the book of life, which is Christ; while by their contumacy they resist the good word of God, and consequently cannot be made of the number of the faithful and blessed.

§ 4. And here let us not err, O christians! but know that they do not only repudiate the word of God, who will not admit of the faith and doctrine of Christ; such as are Mahometans and Jews; but those also who will not continue in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, will not take his life upon them, and will not walk in the light. For which cause consequently God takes away from them even the light of the word, and sound doctrine. "I (saith Christ) am the light of the world; he that followeth me, walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life:" which is, as if he should say, whosoever follows my example, and lives my life, shall be out of danger of being misled by any spirit of delusion: but whosoever shall, on the contrary, neglect to imitate my life, and contemn the light of my life, shall not escape the darkness of errors, and of pernicious delusions, with blindness and hardness of heart.

§ 5. Behold here with me, the most excellent, and most noble, the most learned, the most ingenious, and the most powerful of this world, whose errors from the truth, whose strong seducements and violent delusions, whose blindness and darkness come from no other cause, but because they live not in Christ, but are averse to the imitation of his life; and therefore cannot have the light of life. From hence then there must needs be those which St. Paul calls the works of errors, and satanical lies, or impostures, which rush upon us the more powerfully and violently, because the whole world lies under the power thereof, inasmuch as it refuses to imitate the life of Christ. "For what fellowship, (or society,) is there between light and darkness? And what agreement is there, (or can there be,) between Christ and Belial?" For the purity of doctrine and divine knowledge cannot remain with those that

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live in the devil, in darkness, in pride, in covetousness and filthy pleasure: because how should pure doctrine and divine faith mix themselves together? Or how should they suffer themselves to live together with an impure and an unchristian life? Or what is more disagreeing and irreconcileable, than an impure life, and pure doctrine? Since what "communion hath light with darkness?"

§ 6. Wherefore, if we will retain pure doctrine, the way for it will be wholly to be changed in our minds, and to hold no fellowship with unrighteousness, to have no part with the world, to submit to no agreement with idols and lying vanities, and withal, shunning a life that is not after Christ, but after antichrist. Since what fellowship has the righteousness of Christ with the antichristian unrighteousness of the world? And what concord, as was said, "hath Christ with Belial?" We must imitate Christ, and be content, for that end, to shake off the sleep of sin, and to depart from the darkness of the world, and Christ will then beautify us with the light of faith, and with the light of his presence. For whoso walks not in the footsteps of Christ, and imitates not his love, humility, meekness, patience, and obedience, the same must needs be deceived, and fall short of the truth, which he pursues after, since he walks not in the way which leads to truth. But on the contrary, if we live in Christ, if we walk in love and humility, if all our studies and endeavours respect purely this one thing, namely, that the flesh and Adam be mortified, then the Spirit would quicken us, Christ would live in us: so that we might through him overcome ourselves, and triumph over the flesh, the world, and the devil. Were this but so, certainly there would be less contention and strife about doctrine; and heresies of themselves would then fall to the ground.

§ 7. We have an example of a most strange delusion, for want of this, in Ahab, who by his wicked and tyranical life, through his own evil heart, and the lies of four hundred false prophets, whom he was disposed to believe; became so blinded, as by their provocation

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and encouragement, to undertake that fatal expedition against the Syrians, in contempt of the true prophet Micaiah, who positively and clearly foretold his death in that battle. But he, it seems, by the bias of his own evil mind, willingly was constrained to give credit to the false prophets, prophesying all things to go well with him. Whence the justice of God met with him according to the word of the true prophet, and by due desert, the dogs did lick his blood. And is not this the very same thing that St. Paul says, "The God of this world blinded the minds of them which believe not?" And why has he blinded them, "But that the light of the gospel should not shine upon them?" and therefore he pleads, that if the gospel be hid, it is hid from such as these, that are lost to a sense of the truth, and have shut out the light of the glorious gospel of Christ. And this also is that which God threatens to all hypocrites, such as boast of Christ and his doctrine, but deny him in their life, foretelling that they shall be seduced by the illusion of false prophets, even as Ahab was. "Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouths, and honour me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; therefore the wisdom of the wise shall fail, and the understanding of the prudent shall be hid: the Lord shall shut their eyes, yea, he shall darken the eyes of the prophets, and of the principal of them that see visions: and the word of God shall be unto them as a sealed book, and as letters are to an ignorant man that cannot read."

§ 8. To which agrees exactly St. Paul, as to what he mentions concerning the Jews, how that there was a veil set before them, and cast over their hearts, so that reading in their prophets concerning the Messias, they should not be able to understand them; which veil yet Almighty God would undoubtedly take from them if they would but turn to him. Their minds, says he, were blinded, so that they could by no means stedfastly look to the end of that which was to be abolished, Moses in his writing having covered himself from them with a veil: And unto this day remains the same veil untaken away

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in the reading of the Old Testament, which is done away in Christ. Nevertheless, when they shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. For which happy and blessed time, let us wait and pray.

CHAP. XXXIX.

The Purity of Doctrine, and the Word of God, are not so much by Disputation and writing Books, as by true Repentance and a holy Life, to be obtained and defended.

2 Tim. i. 13, 14.—*Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.*

§ 1. THE purity of doctrine, and the verity of christian faith, must be defended against sects and heresies; after the example of the holy prophets, who preached against false and idolatrous prophets in the Old Testament; after the example of the Son of God, who disputed vehemently against the Pharisees and Scribes; after the example of St. John the evangelist, who wrote his gospel against Ebion and Cerinthus, and the Apocalypse against the false church of the Nicolaitans and others; after the example of St. Paul, who defended most strongly the doctrine of justification by faith,* of good works,† of the resurrection of the dead,‡ of christian liberty, and such like, against certain false apostles; after the example of the holy bishops and fathers of the primitive church, who wrote most strongly against the pagan superstitions, and the heretics of those times; and in œcumenical councils, gathered by the christian emperors, did condemn the chief heretics and patriarchs of the sects, as the Arians, Eunomians, Macedonians, Nestorians, and Eutychians: and lastly by the example of our incomparable hero, Martin Luther, by whose excellent writings the papacy and other heresies, were much weakened: All

* Rom. iii. 21. † 1 Cor. ix. 8. ‡ 1 Cor. xv.

this is as clear as the noon-day. And therefore it remains a thing most fit and requisite, to preach, write, and dispute: that so the purity of doctrine, and the verity of religion may be made manifest, according to the apostle, who will have a bishop to be powerful to exhort in doctrine that is sound, and to hold fast the faithful word, as he has been taught, that by it he may argue with those that contradict, so as to convince the gainsayers.

§ 2. The which, although it be in itself both lawful and laudable, yet it is so fallen out by the abuse of it, that amongst all the bitter disputations and sermons of controversies, and the infinite heaps of writing and counterwriting at this day, the memory of the christian life, of true repentance, devotion, and charity, are in a manner abolished; no other wise than as if the sum and substance of christian religion did merely, or principally consist in disputation, and writing books of controversy, and not in the practice of the gospel; and in true christian erudition. Whereas,

§ 3. I. If we behold the examples of the holy prophets and apostles, as also of the Son of God, it is manifest they did sharply dispute, not only against false prophets and apostles, but also against the superstitions and abominations of the Gentiles; and that they did with no less fervency exhort all to repentance, and to a christian and holy life; and moreover, did shew in most grave sermons and exhortations, how by their impenitency and wicked life, the divine worship and religion did, among professed Israelites, or christians, go backwards, and greatly decay; how the church was wasted, and how that kingdom and people should, for this, be afflicted with famine, war, and plague; all which came exactly to pass, even as they said. Of this kind is that declaration of the evangelical prophet, where he denounces to the people of the Jews, "That because the vineyard of the Lord did not bring forth clusters of good grapes, but wild grapes, therefore Almighty God had decreed to lay it waste." Whereby it plainly appears, that impiety is the cause why God takes his word away from us. To the same sense is that which Christ him-

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self also said, "Walk in the light, whilst you have it, lest the darkness overtake you." For what other thing is it to walk in the light, than to imitate Christ, who is the light? Or what other thing is it to be overtaken with darkness, than to lose the purity of the gospel? Whence it appears, that none can without true repentance and a holy life, enjoy the light; forasmuch as the Holy Ghost, which is the true Enlightener of our hearts, fleeing the ungodly, chooses holy souls only, to make of them friends and prophets of God. For the beginning hereof is the fear of God: And who then doubts impiety to be the beginning of folly, ignorance, and blindness?

§ 4. II. Moreover, the true knowledge of Christ, and his pure doctrine, with the profession thereof, does not consist in words only, but in deed and a holy life, according to that which is written, "They confess they know God, but deny him in their deeds, being abominable, and unbelievers, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobates." And again, "They have the shew of godliness, but deny the power thereof." Whereby it is given us to understand, that Christ (and his word) is denied by a wicked life, as well as by words; and that he has not the true knowledge of Christ, who puts it not into practice. For he that never feels or tastes the humility, the meekness, the patience, and the love of Christ, inwardly in his own heart, knows not Christ; and therefore where necessity requires, such an one cannot confess Christ. Because to confess and preach only the doctrine of Christ, is to divide Christ, and to maim him, if you do not profess and preach his life. We have abundance of books of his doctrine; of his life we have almost none: Every where there are books of controversies concerning doctrine, but very few living books concerning true regeneration and a christian life. Now what is doctrine without life, but a tree without fruit? Or how should he follow the doctrine of Christ, who imitates not his life? For the sum and substance of the doctrine of Jesus Christ is *charity from a pure heart, with a good conscience, and an unfeigned faith.* But we live, alas! in that age wherein there is a great number of persons, whom, if you hear them disputing of the

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doctrines of the christian religion, you would think to be men of great worth, and of true religion, they do it indeed so very well: But if you behold them narrowly, and touch them nearly, you shall then know them to be inwardly and in their hearts full of pride, envy, and covetousness, and that no basilisk can be more venomous than they are: Of whom therefore we must beware. Observe what St. Paul says; for he does not rashly or suddenly join love and faith, that he may shew how these two kindly conspire and consent together: But upon his own most deep experience, charges his spiritual son to hold fast the form of sound words which he had heard of him, "in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."

§ 5. III. And although we cannot arrogate so much to our own strength and piety, that we should make it the price, or meritorious cause of our happiness, knowing with St. Peter, that we are kept in the virtue of God by faith to salvation; yet we must profess this, that by means of an antichristian life, the Spirit of God will surely avoid us with all his gifts; amongst which, faith, knowledge, understanding, and wisdom, are not the least. So it follows again, that without a holy life, purity of doctrine cannot be preserved, and that the wicked who will not imitate Christ, are not likely to be enlightened with the true light. On the contrary, those that walk in the light, that is, who insist and persevere in the blessed footsteps of Christ, are drenched in the true light, which is Christ, and divinely preserved from all hurtful errors. Therefore it is most true which that holy and enlightened writer Taulerus says, "So soon as a man dedicateth and yieldeth himself up to God, and denieth his own will and flesh, then immediately the Spirit of God doth begin to illuminate him, and to endow him with true and solid knowledge: because indeed this man doth celebrate the true sabbath of the heart, and keepeth within an holy day, resting from all sinful lusts, and from his own will and works." Which is to be understood of the state after conversion, and of daily illumination, and the increase of divine gifts and spiritual grace.

§ 6. IV. Not without cause, says the Lord, "I am the way, the truth and the life;" he calling himself first

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the *way*, as who shews the way unto us. But how? not only in his doctrine, but also in his most holy life. Which life of our blessed Lord was no other thing in truth, than a living faith working by love, and exercising hope, patience, meekness, humility, prayer, and the fear of the Lord; and, to speak in a word, it was nothing but a true and perfect conversion, or turning of the heart to God, whereby the soul is drawn to the truth, and to the life; and wherein the whole of christianity consists, and all books are comprised, and which is the breviary, or summary of all the commandments; which is also the true and kingly way to life and truth, and is very Christ himself, the book of life in the revolving and perfect learning whereof we ought to be content to spend all our life. This is that strait way and that narrow gate which few find: This is the book of life which few read, although in it all things are contained which a christian ought to know: So that we shall need no other book to our eternal salvation: Which is the reason why the holy scripture is contained in a very few and small books, that it might hereby appear, that christianity did not consist in the multitude of commentaries and great volumes, but in a living faith, and in the imitation of Christ, according to that of the wise man. "There is no end of making many books; and much meditation of the mind, is affliction:" or, much study is a weariness of the flesh and brain. Wherefore, "let us hear the end of the whole matter: fear God and keep his commandments."

§ 7. V. Moreover, in the parable it is told us, how "that the devil, when men are asleep, cometh and soweth tares among the wheat." Which teaches us, that when men neglect their repentance, and sleep on in their sins, and are overtaken and bewitched with the love of this world, having more care of frail and perishing things, than of the immortal goods; then by little and little the devil sprinkles his seed of false doctrine in the field of pride; whence arise many sects and heresies: For by pride both angels and men lost the true light, and all errors came thereby into the world; which yet we might have been without, if Satan and Adam had lived the

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humble life of Christ. Whereupon St. Paul deservedly says, "arise thou that sleepest, and Christ shall give thee light;" he being willing to shew, that no man can be divinely enlightened, who has not before shaken from his eyes the sleep of sin, and driven from him vain security and impiety, according to that admonition of St. Peter, "Repent and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost:" And that of Christ representing to us, that the world cannot receive the Holy Ghost; even the Spirit of truth, whom, saith he, "the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him." But what else is the world but an ungodly and worldly life, or a life without God.

§ 8. VI. What likewise is the meaning of that saying of the Lord, "By their fruits ye shall know them." What other thing signifies it, but that it is not much crying of, Lord, Lord! but that it is the fruits of a good life which are the signs and marks whereby true and false christians may be discerned? For how belongs the pure doctrine of Christ to those false christians, who, under pretext of sheep's clothing, make a shew as if they were, when inwardly they are nothing less than, true christians.

§ 9. Yet although the life be corrupt, it should not be drawn therefore into an argument of false and wicked doctrine; as the Sectaries and Papists do at this day, by condemning our doctrine for the wickedness of our lives. Nevertheless, it is, and will be, a proof and mark of the men themselves, whereby we may know whether they be true or false christians; though it be none at all as to the doctrine itself, which is held by them. For if so, the doctrine of Christ and his apostles had not been sound, because in their days many false christians were found. He then is doubtless a false christian, who teaches otherwise than he lives: and who when he believes aright, practises not accordingly. Whereby he blots his faith with an antichristian life, as if ivory were spotted with ink. In which sense he is not to be called a christian, any otherwise than as a dead man is called a

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man: And as many therefore as are so, Christ calls them unfruitful trees, fit for nothing but to be burned.

§ 10. VII. That only is the true christian faith, which works by love; by which a man is made a new creature, by which he is regenerated, by which he is united with God, by which Christ lives in him, by which the Holy Ghost dwells and works in him, by which the kingdom of God is established in him; and by which, lastly, through the Holy Ghost purging and enlightening him, the purification and illumination of the heart is begun, carried on, and perfected. To which belong many golden oracles of the holy scripture, such as that in particular; "He that is joined unto the Lord, is one spirit." And what is it to have the spirit of Christ, and to breathe with it, as having one spirit with him, but to have the same mind and understanding, and the same heart and will? which joint-breathing and oneness of spirit, is nothing else but a new, holy, noble, heavenly, spiritual, and heroical life of Christ in us. Another oracle of truth, not unlike to the former, is this, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature;" where to be in Christ, is not only to believe in him, but to live in him. Also, "I will betroth thee unto me forever; in faith I will espouse thee to me." Which indeed signify nothing else but that a man wholly and spiritually is to be united to Christ; so that where faith is, there is Christ; where Christ is, there his life is in man; where the life of Christ is, there is love; where love is, there is God himself, forasmuch as *God is love*; and there the Holy Ghost remains, being the Spirit of love. For all things are connected and closely chained together; they cleave to each other no otherwise than the head to the members, and as the cause is linked with the effect.

§ 11. Which connexion of faith and life, St. Peter admirably representing to us, writes thus, "Giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity: For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren,

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nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these, is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." Where the apostle evidently declares in whom this conjunction of faith and life is, and in whom it is not, and when one may be said to be ignorant of Christ, to fall from faith, and to walk in darkness. For it is the property of true faith to change a man wholly, to renew him, and to quicken him in Christ; so that he may henceforth live and remain in Christ, and Christ may live and remain in him.

CHAP. XL.

Christian Rules for leading a Christian and Devout Life.

1 TIM. iv. 7, 8.—*Exercise thyself unto godliness; for godliness is profitable unto all things; having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.*

§ 1. IN this admonition of the apostle there is contained a brief description of the christian life. By which we are taught, that a christian ought not to mispend his time in studies which profit but little or nothing; but that he ought to exercise himself rather in the noblest and most profitable study, which is that of true christian piety. For a christian is one that is exercised unto godliness, after the image of him whom he serves; and who is one inwardly and in spirit, not outwardly, and in shew. For bodily exercise, or discipline, and exterior acts of religion, can profit but little; and sometimes may hurt, where the spirit and life thereof happen to be overlooked, as too frequently they are. Wherefore it behoves us highly to attend hereunto, and to spend our whole time in the study of an interior and godly life, earnestly pursuing after piety, according to the charge here given; which is a compendium of all christian virtues; and that, first, because it is profitable for all things, and in all things; and is of most admirable service in all our words and deeds, blessing them

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and sanctifying them when we season them therewith: and next, because the most gracious God rewards it both in this life, and in the life to come, wherein we are to receive the everlasting harvest of our labours, if we exercise ourselves herein, and persevere without giving back. And for our encouragement and excitement in this most necessary exercise, let us endeavour to keep in remembrance these following rules.

I. If you cannot live so holy and perfect, as the word of God commands you, and as your heart, moved by the holy Ghost, gladly would; nevertheless despond not: if you cannot do what you wish, yet you must never cease to wish. For after this manner the holy desires of the saints have been always acceptable to God, when they were not able to accomplish what was in their hearts to do for God. These God allows and approves; because he is the respecter of the hearts, not of the works.

II. In all things you either think or do, be diligent to preserve your heart pure, and set a watch over your interior, lest you be defiled with proud thoughts, and vain imaginations, which are after the flesh. For the lust of the flesh is the door of the devil. Therefore have an especial care of this one thing, namely, to crucify your own flesh, and not suffer it to domineer over the spirit. See that your heart be clean, and that nothing unclean enter into it to pollute it. Beware thence of pride, selfishness, and wrath, and such like devilish operations in the soul: for as much as by this means the heart of man is set open to the devil, it is shut up from God.

III. To obtain the liberty of your soul, you must wrestle hard, lest through the proud and evil desires after earthly things, you make yourself a servant and slave of the creatures, who ought to be their lord and master. For seeing that your soul is more noble than all the world, it were surely a very unworthy thing to put it under, and sell it to the world, and to lay out your heart upon the frail and frivolous things thereof.

IV. See that you avoid with all diligence the care and sorrow of this world, which work death. Be not

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solicitous for that which perishes; but be solicitous for that which endures forever. Because as worldly sorrow engenders death; so godly sorrow begets life, and lays up an immortal treasure! Indeed a man ought to bear the loss of no worldly goods, so heavily as the loss of the heavenly substance. By avarice, envy, and overmuch care of a family, see that you forget not this main care: but embrace the work of patience, and lay hold on that blessed mourning, which proceeds from the meditation of your sins, and of future punishments, and thereby works a stable salvation in the soul, with solid peace and joy in God.

V. Hold fast to the cross, and bear it according as you are directed. If you cannot bear your cross with such cheerfulness as many of the saints have done; yet at least take it from the hand of God with patience and humility, acquiescing in, and resting upon his divine will and pleasure. For the will of God, you may be sure, is always good: Neither does it respect or intend any other thing than your benefit and salvation. Whatsoever then God shall appoint or determine in his wisdom for you, or whether you be made merry or sad, poor or rich, high or low, vile or excellent, let this always be in your mind, "Thus it hath seemed good unto God, and is expedient and profitable for me. His will, not mine, be done." Let not that therefore which pleases God, displease you; but rather rejoice, if he carry all things according to his will and your salvation; whatever your own silly heart may possibly have dictated to the contrary. For *all the works of God are good*, as says the son of Sirach: And nothing is more sure and certain than this which another experienced saint has, as from his own constant and deep experience, declared, saying, "The Lord is just in all his ways, and holy in all his works." Hence, far better, and more excellent it is, that God, who does always good and never evil, and who can never swerve from his own end, which is perfect goodness, should in you do all his will, and you willingly submit to the same; than that you, who are by nature always inclinable to what is evil, and can

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of yourself do nothing that is good, should be given up to do and follow your own will.

VI. You are to receive the heavenly visits and divine consolations, with a most humble thankfulness, taking heed that you be not therewith exalted. And if you are not visited with those joys and comforts which are bestowed upon some choice souls, then know for a certainty that the mortification of the flesh is and will be of more profit to you, than joy in the spirit. For by reason of the great plenty of spiritual consolations many fall into spiritual pride. But the Lord knows who are fit to be led in a pleasant and lightsome way, and who are proper to be led by an unpleasant and obscure way, and to be guided in a crooked, narrow, sharp, doleful, frightful, and stony path. Think it always best for you to arrive at life by that way, or course, which the divine wisdom has chosen for you, however different it may be from your own opinion, or the devising of your own heart. Remember that "sorrow is better than laughter:" For, as the wise man observes, by it "the heart is made better." And if you will be wise trust to his experience in this matter, and forget not his admonition who tells you, That the heart of the wise will be in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools in the house of mirth.

VII. Make an offering to God of all you have, and dedicate to him all that is in your power. And if you cannot bring great offerings of devotion, of prayer, of thanksgiving, and the like, offer at least to him that which you have, and that which you can; recommending and adorning your petty sacrifice with a good will and holy desires, that so your religion and devotion may be acceptable in the sight of God. For to have such a will and desire, or to be willing to have it, is no small grace, and will be found a most acceptable sacrifice to God, for the sake of his beloved Son. Since so much as you desire and wish to perform before him of devotion, of prayer, of praise, and of the pursuit after heavenly things; even so much it is before God. He requires nothing of you, but that his grace may work in you. Nor can you return him more than he has first conferred on you. In the mean time desire of the Lord Jesus,

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with humble and sincere prayer, that he would graciously supply your sacrifices with his own most perfect sacrifice. Because he, and he only, is the perfection of your religious service: yours, on the contrary, even all that is of your own, is most lame and imperfect. Say therefore in faith: "O my God and my Father, I beseech thee, let my devotion and dedication of myself unto thee, be accepted; let all my acts of faith, and hope, and love, be received up before thee as sweet incense; let all my prayers and praises and thanksgivings ascend up before thine heavenly altar, and be acceptable in thy sight: graciously behold them all in thy most beloved Son, and esteem them not for their own worth, but for the merit of his all-sufficient sacrifice. O look upon that, and upon all that he wrought for me in the flesh: And it cannot be but that his most perfect works should be pleasing to thee, and mine also for the sake of them. For he, O God, shall copiously and abundantly supply whatsoever is in me defective." And thus by this means, how imperfect soever, or how obscure and small soever thy piety, with thy prayer and thanksgiving, may be; there is given in exchange, for the merit of Christ, the greatest weight of glory and heavenly dignity.

VIII. If your sins and manifold frailties make you sad, let them not make you despair. Although they be many, think yet, there is mercy with the Lord, and that plenteous redemption is with him. If your imperfections be never so great, remember that Christ's merits are far greater, and say with the royal penitent, "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, according to thy great mercies." And when by the grace of God, you are penitent for your sins, even as he was, and behold Christ in faith, then in like manner God is grieved at the punishment of your sin, or sins, and is said to repent himself of the evil, that is, as the effect and product thereof; and thereupon absolution and remission instantly follow this your godly and salutary contrition. For even as the leper was in a moment healed, so soon as he had said to Christ, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean;" and Christ had said to him, "I will, be thou clean:" Even so Almighty God, inwardly and in the Spirit,

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makes you clean, saying, "Be of good comfort, my child, thy sins are forgiven thee." Which great mercy of the Lord in cleansing and absolving you, from your sins, prefigured out by the example of that leper, ought not to give you an occasion to sin again; but only to glorify God in your life, and to say in spirit, "Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name."

IX. Let not injuries, reproaches and revilings, provoke you at any time to wrath, indignation, or revenge; but rather take them as trials of your heart, whereby God designs to prove you, that he may make appear what is in you, and what lies hid in the secret of your mind; whether meekness and humility, or wrath and pride. For whatsoever lies concealed in a man, the same is manifested and brought forth by provocation; according to that saying, *Qualis quisque apud se latet illata contumelia probat:* That is, such as every one is hiddenly in himself, such is he revealed to be by the despiteful usage wherewith he is tried. If therefore your heart be indeed endued with meekness and lowliness, you will easily bear all contempts and injuries. Nay, whatsoever shall happen to you of that kind, you will, after the example of David, when he was reviled by Shimei, accept it as a divine punishment for your just desert, saying, "God hath commanded, or in his providence wisely ordered, such or such an one to revile me, and thus despitefully use me: And I will take it as from the hand of God, against whom I have sinned." Moreover you must think the contempt which you endure from men to be a part of the contumely of Jesus Christ; which a living and true member of him ought to be a partaker of, and to bear together with him, according to that warning of the Holy Ghost: "Let us go forth therefore unto him, bearing his reproach." Or, let us go to Christ, bearing our infirmities and crosses, not being unmindful with what an heart, and what a lowliness of mind he did for our sake bear his reproach; that so for him you in like manner may bear your reproach, and take all manner of injuries with an even mind. Say not thou, shall I suffer these things

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from him, or her. For by reason of the most patient and lowly heart of Jesus, if you would be his disciple, all things must be moderately borne by you, even as he did all that was contrary and irksome to flesh and blood. And furthermore, you are to consider, that his mercy and loving-kindness toward you, and towards all that suffer reproach for his sake, are so very great, that he is ready to reward one contumely or reproach that an innocent person suffers, with many honours and goodly gifts and favours. Thus David knew in spirit, when he received the revilings of Shimei, that this was a pledge and token of honour to come: Wherefore he said, "The Lord hath bidden him: So it may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day." Let not then the tales or calumnies of the men of this world disturb you; but rather rejoice in that the glory of God's Spirit rests upon what is accounted vile by the world; remembering the words of the apostle Peter, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God rested upon you: On their part he is evil spoken of; but on your part he is glorified."

X. Study to overcome your enemies in the best manner; and labour to vanquish them that speak evil of you, and persecute you, with benefits and kindness. Exercise yourself in pacifying an adversary and a bitter detractor, with gentleness and long-suffering; and strive to conquer him in goodness, and in generosity; not in wrath, nor in revenge, nor in returning evil for evil but the contrary. For no man will ever be reconciled to you by this means; forasmuch as victory consists in virtue, not in vice. And as one devil does not drive out another, so one evil never drives away another evil; and revenge never does pacify, but provoke the adversary. A man that is already wounded, and is afflicted with many sores and bruises, is not to be healed with blows: and if he be so mad as to beat and cut himself, he is to be pitied and taken care of; and not treated in the way which he treats either himself or others. So in

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like manner, if a person be evil affected towards you, and in his mad frantic humour treat you barbarously both by word and deed; he is nevertheless to be handled by you with lenity, and not with cruelty, and by sweet and gentle means to be pacified. Since this is that very method which God himself takes to overcome us: So conquering our malice with his goodness, and our wrath with his love; and inviting us with such and so great benignity to repentance. And St. Paul has hence recommended the same art to us also, saying, "Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good."

XI. When you observe a gift in your neighbour with which God has adorned him, before and above you, and others, take heed not to envy this in him; but rejoice rather, and give God thanks for it. Consider that since all the faithful are one body, it must needs follow that the beauty of every member ennobles the whole body; when on the contrary you perceive any misery in your neighbour, lament it even as if it were your own; considering that the condition of all men is equal, and alike subject to evil; and that the weakness of all flesh is the same, and alike corrupted in itself, without the grace and power of God to remedy it. Christ has also set you here an example: And he that hence takes no compassion of, nor condoles over his neighbour, let him pretend whatever he will, he is no member of Christ. For he looked upon our state as his own, and so by compassionating us, and bearing the infirmities of our nature, delivered us from all our enemies, and all our miseries. To which appertains that of St. Paul, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ," even that law of love and mercifulness which he imposed on himself to fulfil towards us.

XII. But notwithstanding you are thus to bear with the infirmities of your neighbour, and compassionate his miseries, and relieve them to the utmost of your power, you are yet to hate his vices, even as the very works of the devil. Flee therefore the devil, and abhor his works, wheresoever and in whomsoever you behold them; lest you become as wicked, or more wicked than that person in whom the devil works,

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and the world reigns. Hate his unrighteousness, but bewail his lot, and that because he is encompassed with such evils, and subdued with such sins. And see you commend and offer up his cause to God, in like manner as Christ prayed for his enemies, when by their malice he was hanging upon the cross. Wherefore, pray likewise, and say, "Father, forgive them." Hate not the man, but the vice only: for whoever hates man, cannot please God, seeing it is God's property to be kind and loving towards man, and to desire that all men should repent and be saved. Is not this the very end for which Christ came, and bore our flesh, even as it is written, "The Son of Man came not to destroy, but to save men's souls." Luke ix. 36.

XIII. Think all men frail, but none more than yourself: for before God all men are of equal condition, and all alike are condemnable; forasmuch as we have all sinned, neither have we any thing of which we may boast before God. How great soever a sinner your neighbour may be, take heed you believe not therefore that you are the better before God. Remember this warning: "Let him that standeth, take heed lest he fall." You can never be too humble, be never so low in your own eyes. He that makes himself the lowest of all men, keeps the grace and favour of God. And certain it is that you no less stand in need of the grace and mercy of God, than the very greatest sinner. Which grace is the greater to you, as you are the more humble. Wherefore blessed Paul accounted himself as the chief of sinners; and says, that for this cause he obtained mercy, that in him Christ might shew forth all long-suffering. And with this agrees what he elsewhere declares, saying, as for myself, I will glory of nothing but of *my infirmities*, that so the *power of Christ may rest upon me*, 1 Cor. xii. 9.

XIV. Consider that true illumination follows the contempt of the things of the world. For even as the children of the world have their inheritance upon the earth; so the children of God have theirs in the world to come; and their portion is therefore in light, and their minds are here illuminated to discern the things

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that are far remote and invisible to as many as the God of this world has blinded. The treasures then of the children of this world are temporal honours, frail wealth, vain splendour and beauty, which they love and set their hearts upon: but the treasures of the children of the new and heavenly world, that is to be revealed in Christ, are in this world poverty, contempt, contumely, reproach, the cross, and martyrdom. Wherefore Moses preferred the reproach of Christ before the treasure and crown of Egypt. This was in him true illumination.

XV. Remember that the name of a christian written in heaven, is the true knowledge of Christ in faith, by which we are really transplanted into Christ, and written in him as in the book of life; from whom flow all the living virtues, which God in that day will beautify and adorn with an honourable testimony, bringing forth all those treasures which we shall have laid up in heaven; and bringing to light every work which is wrought in God. Not one of the saints hath ever made himself famous in any virtue, which will then be forgotten. And this virtue, as faith, charity, mercy, patience, and the like, shall cause that name written in heaven, to be the note and character of the saints, and their eternal memorials. Of which more hereafter in the next book; the subject whereof is to be the Book of Life.

CHAP. XLI.

In which is repeated the Sum of the whole Book: That the Whole of Christianity consists in the Restoration of the Image of God in Man, by the Extinction of that of the Devil in him.

2 COR. iii. 18.—*We all with open face, beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are (by degrees) changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

§ 1. IN the true knowledge of Christ (wherein is comprehended that of his person, offices, benefits, and heavenly gifts) consists life everlasting. And thus does

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the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of Jesus, by such knowledge, enkindle in man, as it were, a certain new ray of light, which will shine out still brighter and brighter, passing on from glory to glory; even as it were a metallic body or mirror, which is more and more brightened by constant polishing: Or as a little child, which by continual nourishment daily grows up, till at length he arrives at full manhood. For as soon as the righteousness of Christ is through faith conferred, then the man on whom it is so conferred, begins instantly to be regenerated, and is really born anew; which we call his conversion: And after that successively proceeds on to be renewed from day to day, after the image of God. For you must know he does not all at once grow up into a *perfect man*; but remains a child for some time, who must be continually nourished and nurtured by the virtue and power of the divine Spirit, and so brought every day more and more into a conformity with the Lord Jesus Christ. Since,

§ 2. The whole life of a christian upon earth, is properly nothing else but a renewing of the image of God: So that he may constantly live in the new birth, and daily mortify the old till the body of sin be in him at length destroyed and quite slain; and this, by that faith whereof he is made partaker, and that is of a divine operation. Which life must be begun in this world, that it may afterwards in another be perfected. But in whomsoever this shall not be begun before the day of judgment, (and even before that of his own departure hence) the image of God in him will never be repaired.

§ 3. Wherefore I have thought it might be here worth the while, to repeat again what is meant by the *image of God*, and by the *image of the devil*. For in the right knowledge of these does the stress of the whole christian religion lie: It is the very cardinal point upon which it all turns; as also a great many other doctrines, such as for instance are, the articles of original sin, of free-will, of repentance, of conversion, of faith, of justification, of prayer, of regeneration, of the new man, of sanctification, and lastly, of newness of life and obedience. These all do hence borrow no small light, and without the un-

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derstanding hereof, they are but very dark. Concerning this therefore, the things which follow ought to be well marked and digested.

§ 4. The soul of man is an immortal spirit, endowed by God with excellent powers and faculties: as with understanding, will, memory, and other motions and affections of the mind. See that you turn this towards God, that you may behold him therein as in a glass: And, by beholding him, endeavour that his image may be formed in your soul; so that God may appear therein reflected manifestly, as it were, with an open face in a clear mirror. In which sense the apostle pronounces the glory of the Lord, 2 Cor. iii. 10. iv. 16, which he calls also *the glory of God in the face* of Jesus Christ, to shine forth in this renewed image of God in the soul, *as in a glass.* For the soul being now changed into the same image with Christ, by the Spirit of the Lord introduced, is that very looking-glass, wherein all the glory of God is by man discerned.

§ 5. Moreover, as God is a perfectly good, and holy being; even so also was the substance of the soul, and its true nature and essence, originally good and holy. And as in God there is nought of evil; even so was the soul of man perfectly free from all manner of evil in the beginning. As in God there is nothing but what is right; even so in the soul there was nothing at first but what was right also. For he is the rock whose work is perfect; even a "God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he." Compare Deut. xxxii. 4. and Ps. xcii. 15. As God is infinitely knowing and wise; even so the human soul was full of divine and spiritual knowledge, of heavenly and eternal wisdom. And even as the divine wisdom ordered all things in number, weight, and measure, and knew the powers of all creatures as well in heaven as in earth: So also was the mind of man accordingly enlightened with the same light.

§ 6. And as it was with the understanding, so also with the will in like manner. For even as that was the image and reflection of the divine understanding, so was this of the divine will in every thing: It was holy as the pattern was holy, and exactly conformable with this will

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of God. Hence as God himself is, so was the human soul, righteous, loving, merciful, long-suffering, patient, meek, gentle, true and pure. Yea, all the passions also or affections, all the appetites, the cravings, and the motions of the heart, being made most perfectly conformable to the motions and affections of the divine mind, as in Christ; did partake of this conformity of the will of man with that of God. As God is therefore love, so did all the affections and motions of man in his first estate, breathe nothing but love, did express nothing but pure divine charity. As God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are one in an unspeakable and eternal bond of love; so all the affections, motions, and desires of man's soul did burn with a most perfect and flaming love, cleaving to God fully with all the forces, powers, and faculties he had, "with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might." Deut. vi. 5. So that thence man did verily love God more than himself, and did prefer God's honour before his own; and that beyond all comparison too. Whereby he was united with God in spirit.

§ 7. But as now the image of God shone forth in the soul; so the image of the soul again shone forth in, and from the body. This therefore was holy, chaste, and pure throughout, was not subject to any unclean motions or filthy desires; was undefiled and without spot or blemish; was in every part beautiful, well proportioned and graceful; was of a most sound and vigorous health, and a constitution even out of the danger of sickness; was such as death lastly had no power over, and was perfectly free from all weariness, pain, listlessness, passion, grief, trouble, and old age, the common attendants and warnings of mortality. In a word, the whole man, both in soul and body, was pure, holy, righteous, and every way acceptable to God. For that man might be the image of God, it was necessary that his body also should be holy and conformable to God: Accordingly St. Paul both exhorts and prays, that the body, together with the spirit and soul, be sanctified wholly; and so thereby preserved holy and blameless for the coming of our Lord. For since man is com-

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pounded of soul and body, and exercises both bodily and spiritual functions; there was a necessity, that the instrument of the soul, by which it acts, should be pliable and obedient, well suited and adapted, and holy as that was holy; to the end that the holy and righteous soul might bring its works to perfection through the body and in the body.

§ 8. As therefore the soul did flame forth strongly in the most pure love of God; so in like manner did all the forces and powers of the body pleasantly break forth and dance as it were for joy, in the love of God, and also in the love of our neighbour, for God's sake. As the soul was altogether merciful, even so was the body with its whole might and all its faculties, sweetly carried towards tenderness and compassion. As chastity did shine forth from the soul, that was made all divine and pure; even so the whole body in like manner, with all the inward and outward senses and powers thereof, did set forth visibly the most perfect purity and chastity. To conclude, the perfections of all the virtues did not less gloriously shine in the body, than in the soul itself; so that the body was the holy organ of the soul, in every thing suited to it, and working together with it. And hence it was easy for man, in the state of innocency, to love God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his strength, and with all his mind, and to love his neighbour as himself; which is the whole both of the old and new law given to man. See Deut. vi. 5. Matt. xxii. 37, 39. and Luke x. 27.

§ 9. Now for this reason, as often as God calls for the heart of man, we are thereby to understand the whole man, both as to body and soul, and the powers, faculties and operations of them both. In which sense the name of heart is frequently taken in holy scripture: so that under it are comprehended, first, all the chief powers of the soul, such as do in a manner constitute and make as it were the essence of the same; as the understanding, the will, and the memory: and next, those inferior, or subordinate ones which have their dependance on the body, and particularly on the blood and spirits, as the sensitive affections, and lustings. Nor is

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there any other reason but this, why God, by demanding of man the whole soul, does under that name require not a part, but the all of man; that is, according as man in his whole capacity is said to have been created a living soul. Inasmuch therefore as he requires the soul, he requires the whole man, whatsoever he is, with all and every one of his powers and abilities. For he must in them all be conformed to God, and wholly renewed in Christ Jesus. And thus man having put off the old nature, and being renewed in the spirit of his mind, must walk henceforth in the new life of the spirit; yea, in the very spirit itself, as now made one with it, according as it is written: Walk in the Spirit; and again, Put on the new man, which after God is created.

§ 10. Moreover, there was a perfect joy in God, which did accompany this perfection of holiness, righteousness, and divine charity in man; whereby all the faculties and springs both of his body and soul, did even run over with the fulness of its delight, and so triumphantly break forth into act. For wherever the divine holiness is resident, there also is the divine joy present. These two are knit fast together with an everlasting bond, and make up the very image of God. But now, as in this life, we possess only after an imperfect manner the divine righteousness and holiness, and as it is here begun only to be formed; hence we do but taste while we are here, the first fruits of that heavenly joy. Yet forasmuch as the righteousness of Christ is verily and indeed begun in all sincere believers, there are also the beginnings and foretastes of the divine joy verily and indeed to be found and tasted in this very state; and accordingly are by some christians, that have a good spiritual experience, actually discerned, and are with great clearness, at times, by them perceived and enjoyed. What progress therefore any one makes in the love of God, be it more or less, just so much does he experience of divine joy in his soul.

§ 11. And this holy and divine love, as it shall in the next life rise up to the utmost pitch of our natures, and attain its full perfection, must perfect the divine joy of

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the soul : So in that day the christian's joy (arising out of love) will be full and complete, as our Lord himself bears record, John xvi. 22, 24. and xvii. 23. For divine love, which is charity, is the only true life and the only true joy. But where this charity is not, this love of God is not, there properly is neither joy nor life ; but death itself, very death, the everlasting portion of devils and of wicked, hardened men.

§ 12. Whence has a father joy ? Is it not from love towards his children ? Whence has a bridegroom his ? Is it not from love towards the bride ? Wherefore it is written, "As a bridegroom rejoices over his bride," Isa. lxii. 5. But how much more sweet shall be the joy which is perceived from the love of our Creator springing in us : when he most sweetly, most tenderly, most ravishingly, will not only embrace us as a father his children, but rejoice over us even as over his bride, and will kiss us "with the kisses of his mouth," that is, in Christ (who is his mouth and word) kiss us, Cant. i. 1. And in him most lovingly come to us, by the sweet love of the Holy Spirit (who is the Spirit of love) to make his dear abode with us. O how short will be the joy of a father, or of a bridegroom, in comparison hereof !

§ 13. But take heed concerning this image of God, which consists in a likeness to and conformity with God ; that you do not therefore think, as if man were made equal with God in holiness. No : by no means. For God is infinite as to his essence, virtues, and properties ; incomprehensible, and without all limit or bound ; so that nothing is in any wise to be compared with him : And man therefore in his first estate could not properly be said to bear about *God* in him ; seeing that he was made but to bear the *image of God* only : According to what has been plainly already declared by us from the the very beginning, in the chapter concerning the image of God in man.

§ 14. And the things which we have taught concerning this image of God are most true and certain, and out of all doubt. For it cannot be denied, that God created man, to the end he should be the most bright

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mirror of his Godhead and majesty ; if his word, at least, may deserve our credit. So that if man was but desirous of knowing the nature of God, he might then, by looking into himself, have beheld God as in a glass ; he might have clearly perceived the expressed image of the Deity within his own breast ; and might have glorified God in this image, and reflected his wonders, to the praise of him who is the brightness of his Father's glory.

§ 15. This image was the life and the blessedness of man. But the devil with envious eyes looking upon this image of God in man, and not able to bear the same, did leave no stone unturned, but tried all his subtle cunning, by which he could hope to overthrow God's image in man, through disobedience and enmity against God. Which he did accordingly effect with so much subtlety and so much depth of intrigue, as never any thing was besides, or shall be hereafter effected. For he was not ignorant, that if man had continued in that state, he would have been lord of the devil : but if he could be induced to fall from it, he should thereby become the lord, (or rather the tyrant) of man.

§ 16. When therefore with all the forces and powers of his cunning policy, and most exquisite malice, he could find nothing more likely to accomplish his designs, than that by which he himself had been bewitched in his revolt from God ; he began with words sweetly dropping like honey, to insinuate into the imagination of our mother, no less than the affectation of the divine Majesty, by means of the serpent, that most fair and beautiful goer-between, who was as the agent and manager betwixt both the parties in this grand crime. For indeed what can there ever appear more divine, or what is there more sublime even to be wished for, than for one to *be as God* ?* So then by this method man, being craftily circumvented, came to lose the divine image, and then immediately to be clothed upon with the abominable image of Satan ; which consists in the affectation of divine Majesty. For,

* Note ; The very same word is used in the original in both these places, viz. in the beginning God created, &c. and ye shall be as God, &c. which last our version has rendered Gods.

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§ 17. This aspiring thought being thus begotten in the mind, and this most haughty arrogance of the imagination once admitted, immediately there followed hereupon man's apostasy, which was by the disobedience and transgression of the commandment concerning the tree not to be meddled with. Whereupon the image of God was extinguished, the holy Spirit fled away from man, and the evil spirit imprinted his image on him in the room of that which was gone. Hence so many men, so many slaves now of the devil. They bear his mark and image: and therefore are his.

§ 18. But the devil, in subjecting man to his dominion and kingdom, cruelly insults over him; and as a prodigious and unbridled giant deals with a little puny child, so he begins to foam and rage, bearing all before him. The understanding in man is hence darkened and blinded; the will by disobedience is distorted, and turned from God; and all the springs and powers of the heart are so stirred up against God, that being bewitched and intoxicated with a devilish malice, they in a most shameless manner set themselves against the Almighty. In one word, the whole image of God in man now lay slain, and the whole race of mankind was made fruitful by the hellish satanical nature, as by a certain infected seed, full of a hidden malignity, that extremely spreads. Whereby men became the true offspring of Satan, or sons of the devil naturally begotten; and took out of the seed of the devil their father, his very image, or likeness; poisoned with all manner of wickedness and hatred against God, as the diseased matter and poison of the soul.

§ 19. *Thus died man!* Thus died he the death everlasting! For as the image of God is the life of man, and his salvation; so the departure, or destruction, of this image is the death of man, even death eternal, and his damnation, which is also called a death in trespasses and sins. See Eph. ii. 1. and Col. ii. 13.

§ 20. This death they best of all understand, who by being cast into most grievous spiritual temptations, do very sensibly experience the devil's rage and tyranny, by which he infests and torments the wretched souls

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beyond what is in the ordinary power of sin to do. Now, unless the Holy Ghost shine in upon the soul that is under this terrible cross, and by darting in some ray of his light now and then comfort her, giving her a lively consolation in God; the devil slays the man with this death, and racks the soul with the very torments and anguishes of hell itself.

§ 21. Hereupon then all the natural forces of the body sink, all strength fails, the heart withers and pants, and the very marrow in the bones consumes away, so that there is no whole part in the body: As in the 6th and 38th Psalms may at large be seen. The very word of God to such a one seems lifeless and dead: he finds in it no manner of devotion, no savour of spiritual life. And this is that spiritual death, into which the soul is fallen. And while the soul remains thus spiritually dead, all human holiness, righteousness, excellence, might, power, glory, honour, arts, and wisdom, can avail nought to the captive of death. For man shall without doubt perish, all this notwithstanding, if the grace of God do not succour him: and that alone is able to succour and deliver him; and must alone be depended on.

§ 22. Hence learn therefore, O man, duly to look into, and rightly to consider the abominable filthiness of original sin, as the very sink of abomination, and the most dreadful of all things dreadful. For by this was the hereditary righteousness of God lost, and the hereditary unrighteousness of the devil implanted into men. For this reason was the sinner cast away and banished from God; and consequently was doomed to an infernal death. Which, without all controversy, he must undergo, without he obtain forgiveness of sin for Christ's sake through faith; and so be re-established by grace in the principality from which he fell.

§ 23. But that you may more deeply look into this your corruption both of soul and body, I have thought fit to explain the same here, for your sake, a little more fully; beseeching you also, for God's sake, and for the sake of your own everlasting happiness, and with all earnestness admonishing you, that you be sure to pon-

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der daily again and again, and most seriously meditate in your mind, upon this point of *original crookedness*, or the inborn depravedness of our nature. Whereby, even as a man beholds in a glass the outward face, so you may behold in yourself your own natural wretchedness, and stubborn perverseness, with all the malignity which comes along with you into the world: And so, as a consequence hereof, you may never forget to mourn and lament on this account; that deliverance hence may be obtained for you.

§ 24. For all christianity is indeed nothing else, but a constant and incessant wrestling of the spirit in us, with original sin, and a continual purging out of the same by the aid of the Holy Ghost and by true repentance. For so much verily as any one mortifies this natural bent and propensity to evil, so much is he renewed after the image of God, even day by day. And as many as are not inwardly mortified by the Holy Ghost, after this manner, are at most no other than hypocrites; let them with an outward cloak of holiness make never so fine and gaudy a shew of christianity: Neither can they enter into the kingdom of God, being not renewed in the image of God, how much soever they may set up for godliness, or wear its livery, and take up his name for a cover. For whatsoever is not dead to itself and is not consequently renewed and quickened by the Holy Spirit according to the aforesaid image of God, is unfit for, and incapable of, the kingdom of God.

§ 25. Whence therefore evidently shines forth the highest and most absolute necessity for the new and heavenly birth in the soul's regeneration, and for the total renewing of depraved nature. Which will still yet more fully appear, if you consider the introduced image of the devil, as it is found in you according to the rule and equity of the law. For as the devil does not love God, but hates him with his whole heart; so he has infected man's soul with the same poisonous contagion, and transfused from himself thereinto a malice against God; so that man by nature does neither love God, nor honour him, nor believe in him, nor call upon him, nor trust in him; but being filled with a secret lurking en-

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mity against him, flees and starts back from him; and even shuns him as we shun an enemy. Also as the devil, being hurried away with a blind fury of mind, lives continually without God, not being careful in the least about the will of God, but driving on violently after his own will and humour: So in like manner, the soul of man being by him bewitched, leads a life after his own fancy, unmindful either of God, or of God's will; without faith, without Christ, without light. Which inward darkness and dreadful night of the mind, produces in man the most dismal and altogether horrible destruction of the divine light and image; and brings forth in him that abominable sin, wherein man left to himself, says; *there is no God.* And by reason of this blindness, all mankind is become an abomination before God, and is accursed in all its ways; as that which is made an *Anathema*, and devoted to destruction.

§ 26. But notwithstanding there did still remain some sparks of natural light, after this, in man's understanding, whereby he might come to know that there was a God; as also, that this God must be just, according as all the heathen philosophers unanimously teach: yet however, the spiritual life itself, which is after God, and his righteousness, was extinguished wholly in man. For conscience, which is the law of God written in every man's heart, when it was first formed by him, teaches every one what is good and agreeable to God. Thus if you look for instance upon a person that is unchaste, there is not one that does so much live in the pleasures of the flesh, but he now and then thinks with himself, that surely there is a God, and that this God is not endued with such manners as he is; but is most pure; and so not like him by any means. He cannot consequently but reflect, that this holy and pure God, must needs have a hatred for every sort of pollution and uncleanness: and that therefore, if he would be acceptable to him, he ought to live chastely, abstaining from all impurity. But this good thought and spark of light is presently damped, and put out by the filthy desires of the body crowding in upon the mind: just after the same manner as a little spark of fire is by water poured upon

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it; and is overwhelmed and swallowed up by a flood of fleshly imaginations let in upon it, from the corrupted fountain boiling up within.

§ 27. After the same manner a liar and slanderer sometimes likewise reasons with himself: "There is a God, who is true, and deceives no man; and who wills not that any man should deceive, or backbite, or slander another: Wherefore, he must needs be an errant fool that makes lies his refuge." Also the murderer, and he that bears malice in his heart against his brother, if he cool never so little, cannot but thus commune with himself; "Is there not a God, whose are the lives of the spirits of all flesh? Verily there is a God, even a God that judges right, and to whom vengeance solely belongs. There is a God who wills not the death of any man, but that he should live: yea, a God whose pleasure it is, that the lives of men should not be by men destroyed, but preserved." This little glimmering spark of conviction, tending to a better course, endures, alas! but a moment; and then is quenched with the devilish wrath, and with the deadly sweetness of revenge, which overpowers the same as a strong tide.

§ 28. From all which it plainly appears, that the spiritual life, consisting in holy love and truth, is in the carnal or natural man utterly perished and dead. And thus the wiser sort of heathens, however they might sometimes maintain both the being of a God, and his providence over human affairs, by the light of nature; yet presently being carried strongly away with the darkness of their own heart, they did cloud again and involve that Providence which they before asserted, with such a number of doubts and difficulties, and express the same so very ambiguously and uncertainly, as very little is to be made of what they say: As their books sufficiently witness.

§ 29. From this hereditary blindness of heart, this natural inbred darkness and obscurity, springs up unbelief, incredulousness, uncertainty and unsettledness of mind. In which since all men are by nature, so they are an abomination in the sight of God; for as much as they

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live not by faith, nor by a childlike trust in God. Because the natural man is altogether ignorant of this spiritual life, which is the life of faith, and of the works thereof. So hence he is a profane person. He calls not consequently upon God: But he trusts to his own wisdom, power, and strength. Which is the greatest blindness and darkness of mind that can be.

§ 30. From this blindness there further arises a contempt of God, and carnal security. For as the devil humbles not himself before God, but, being hardened in his pride, even insults God; so has he infected the soul of man with the very same vices, poisoning it with contempt of God, security and insolence. Hence he also, like his father, will not humble himself before God; but is stout and insolent, haughty and self-willed, and is for doing every thing after his own will, and as he conceits best, without the fear of the Lord to keep him in the least awe. Furthermore, as the devil, relying on his own strength, and on his own wisdom, thereby governs himself: so in like manner the soul of man, when infected with the contagion of the devil, acts in conformity with him; and will always hence be its own teacher, counsellor, and master. For such a one thinks himself too good to be taught, advised, or ruled by any other. Moreover, as the devil seeks his own honour, so does the natural man, standing in his image, seek his also, and that alone, without any regard to the divine honour and glory. As the devil has contended with God; so has he armed the spirit of man against God to contend with him in like manner. And as the devil also rages against God, and runs into extravagant transports of fury; so has he sowed and impregnated the soul of man with the restless seed of impatience, whereby he is apt to rave as one distracted.

§ 31. As the devil blasphemes the name of God, and is extremely ungrateful towards his Creator; even so also it is with man, formed after his accursed image. As the devil is unmerciful, is wrathful, is revengeful; even so too is the soul of man which he has poisoned with the very same leaven, communicating thereto the malignity

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of his nature, as a most pestilential poison. As the devil delights to lord it over men, and to tickle himself with vain honour and foolish glory; even so man, tainted with the same source of maliciousness and tyrannic ambition, takes pleasure therein. And hereupon he haughtily lifts himself up above his neighbour; he laughs at him, though perhaps wiser and better than himself, for a fool and a sot; he shuns his company as a person not worthy to be conversed with; yea, he abhors him as a great sinner above others, and one infamous for his crimes; whence he thanks God, with a boast, that he is not so. But we need not run out further into instances of this kind; since the conformity betwixt one and the other is so very evident, that it can hardly be more.

§ 32. But here you are to remember, O man, and well to fix it in your mind, how in these and all the other cases that might be instanced, this is not the method of God. For God never charges the outward members; but the heart he always charges, and lays the guilt upon the soul only. It is the heart that is the murderer and the liar, not the hand, or the mouth. It is the soul that is here guilty; and therefore is every where endited and arraigned in scripture. So that when God commands men to *call upon* him *in the time of trouble*, Psal. l. 5. this command he gives to the soul, not to the mouth; and it is the same in every other case. Whoever observes not this, is in reading God's word blinder than a mole: He will still remain blind; he will have no right apprehension of original corruption, of repentance, or of regeneration; yea, he will never come truly to understand so much as any one article of the christian religion.

§ 33. We have daily before our eyes the extreme wickedness of men, their horrid pride, their savage hatred, their barbarous enviousness, and other brutish qualities wherewith they tear and rend one another, after the manner of wild beasts. So that being seized as with a fit of raging madness, and by the strong bias of an unsound mind violently transported with malice, they frequently matter not even to expose their own lives, in

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order to hurt others: For many so long for the destruction of their neighbour, that they are not afraid of running too great a risk of their own. Thus they lay pits for others, not being secure but that they themselves may fall into them: And wish that these might perish from off the earth, and their name be utterly blotted out; while at the same time they pursue their own ruin more than theirs. Thus as the devil is a murderer, so does he stir up the soul, to thirst in like manner after man's blood. For all these inhuman and detestable qualities of the heart, this envy, this wrath, this bitterness of mind, this rancour, what are they else, but the very seed of the devil sown and shed in man, and his express image engraven upon the soul? O how has the devil thus portrayed himself in man! How has he propagated himself? How has he imaged himself through the human nature! O the diabolical portraiture!

§ 34. God had implanted into man a conjugal affection, that was pure, chaste, and honourable; that from thence children might be generated after the divine image. Nor could there certainly have been either a pleasure more holy, or a love more heavenly, than that whereby man in this blessed estate would have propagated the image of God and mankind, for the glory of his Creator and man's salvation. Nay, if man in the state of innocence could have begotten infinite children, could have an infinite number of times propagated the honour and image of God, and multiplied the heavenly seed and generation upon earth; nothing sure could have been more grateful than this; nothing more pleasant, more delightful, more full of holy joy; nothing, in a word, could have been before it. For all these acts would then have flowed forth from a pure love towards God and towards men, as so many images of God. For even as God did by, and from the creation of man, feel a holy pleasure, and had delight in him, as in his image and fair lovely mirror, as it were, "rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth." So also man would in like manner have perceived a most pure pleasure in the procreation of his like, and the propagation of God's image.

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§ 35. But the custom and way of marriages at this day, and how satan has polluted and defiled this most pure and most chaste flame of conjugal love, and profaned it with all uncleanness and sordidness, is indeed more clear than the sun at noonday. Behold, how the holy bond of matrimony is by the unclean spirit trampled upon, polluted, and unhallowed! See, how spotted it now is all over with spots of the flesh, and how under it many vices and impurities shelter themselves!

§ 36. As God is just, the devil is unjust; he is hence a thief, a plunderer, a pirate: and being so in himself, he has instilled also into man's soul the same unjust thievish disposition, the same griping, ravenous nature. As the devil likewise is a false accuser, a fallacious reasoner, and a treacherous informer, as well as a scornful mocker at God and man; misrepresenting both the words and actions of every one, and by a knavish interpretation wresting them to a wrong sense: of which artful cunning, he gave a most notable instance and pledge, when by it he tricked our first parents. Gen. iii. Thus too has the soul of man, corrupted by the devil, taken from him, by inheritance, a crooked, perverse, and lying nature; that is, excellently skilful at carping and at backbiting.

§ 37. This is the devil, it is the plague and poison of his seed wherever found, the contagiousness of which cannot be expressed. This devilish disposition and corruption of the soul is so horrible and manifold, that it is altogether impossible to declare in words these wiles, these fine reaches, these subtle contrivances, and the sundry sorts of delicate weavings of diabolical cunning. See Psalm v. 9. Rom. iii. 13. and James iii. 5, 6. Where you will find set forth in a most lively manner that sink and common sewer of evils, that world of wickedness and mischief, which by the deceitful tongue of man is produced; so as always to point, as with the finger, at the very inward venom of the devil, which secretly lurks in the soul, thence spreading and diffusing itself. For God, as it was before taken notice of, does not blame the mouth alone, or the tongue, or

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hands, or the feet; but does in his law, lay the fault upon the whole man, yea, charge it upon the heart rather, and the soul, as the cause and spring of all the evils committed: as it is plain and undeniable from the last of the holy commandments, which forbids coveting or lusting. Ex. xx. 17. Being compared with Rom. vii. 7. Which thing ought well and diligently therefore by us to be heeded.

§ 38. And this is that image of the devil so deeply engraven in the human soul, whereby man is delighted in the lust of sinning, which is concupiscence, and in satisfying the itch of slandering and defaming another. And how many, alas! are there, who reckon themselves well enough grounded in the principles of christianity, who catch at any occasion of bespattering or lessening their neighbour, and spitting out their venom against him: and those who have done this are apt to applaud themselves, and say presently: "This is what I for a long while suspected: I thought as much before: now I have enough; I am eased of a great burden; I seem to be alive again, since, by following the leadings of my own mind, I have so finely dealt with such an one. I think I have been too cunning for him." Ah! poor man to be pitied! Alas! what is your blindness that you do not discern, who it is that has transformed you into such a slanderer and a devil? and whose image it is you carry about you? See you not, that this is the very nature of the devil, the seed of the devil, the property of the devil! discern you not this to be his true disposition and genius, which he has implanted in the soul of man, that it might there fruitfully display itself, springing up with much abundance in all sorts of vices, but more particularly, in pride, covetousness, lust, and slander; as daily experience does more than sufficiently witness? Alas, is this your cunning!

§ 39. Behold, O man! yea, behold the foul, the horrible, the profound corruption of the devilish image of the accursed fruitful womb of sin! O how filthy! how dismal! how deep and unsearchable is it! Behold this again and again; and descending into yourself, there learn to know the image and nature of the devil,

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which as a cancerous humour is spread throughout your soul, with all its perverse qualities; and how your soul is thereby become an abomination and a desolation; being after such a dreadful manner laid waste, that no creature can thoroughly search into the deep malignity and wickedness of the heart of man. Neither are you yourself able to look enough into, or to utter forth in words, that horrid detestable venom, which is as a gangrene in your bowels, and in your innermost parts, rottenness.

§ 40. Wherefore, I earnestly beseech and entreat, yea, adjure every one that reads this, that he ponder with himself, reflect, meditate, and seriously ruminate upon these things which I have written concerning the *depravedness and corruption of man's heart;* even as much as if they had been said a thousand and a thousand times over, and impressed and inculcated without end. For so great is this virulence, so malignant, so pestilential, so deeply also rooted, that it is not in the power of any creature, either angel or man, ever to root it out, or to purge and free our nature from it in any degree. All the powers and abilities of all men together are vastly short of this inward working power of sin in the soul. For how should any one be able to work out his salvation with his own natural forces, seeing none of them all but are corrupted, utterly depraved, and even quite dead to things spiritual?

§ 41. Man therefore will be forever miserable, and remain eternally drowned and lost in these pollutions, unless there come to his help one that is able to succour; the treader upon the serpent's head, the most mighty Lord over sin, death, and hell; by whose divine virtue the defiled nature of man may be renewed, transformed, and perfectly purified.

§ 42. From all which it will appear plain, that justification cannot be the work of man, but must be the work of Christ only: as it will in like manner appear, that regeneration, which is the being born again by the Spirit, is most highly and indispensably needful to the fallen nature of man. Since, according to the inward principle of corruption and inbred propenseness towards

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evil, there is now a sort of natural necessity that the soul under the bondage of it should live wickedly, and should by a mad transgression, break all the commandments of Almighty God, yet those more especially of the first table; and this forasmuch as the enmity against God is here made more deeply manifest in this transgression. Which is because the understanding and the will are now so corrupt, and so dead, that according to their natural state and bent, they cannot have any love, fear, or reverence for God; cannot call upon him, honour him, praise him, or worship him; cannot put the least trust in him, or turn themselves towards him.

§ 43. But as to what yet regards the second table, I acknowledge indeed, that there still remains in the soul of man some small spark of free-will, though very weak and feeble. This nevertheless governs at least the outward works, and so far keeps in and restrains the evil lusts and desires which boil up within, that they may not break out into act; which is confirmed by the examples of the heathens, that have been illustrious for their virtuous deeds.

§ 44. But it is a far greater work than this to change the heart, to turn it to God, and to cleanse it from corrupt affections: this is a work not to be accomplished by any other, but the Divine Power. For there remains still the intimate hidden root of the tree of evil; and the little strings, or fibres, cleaving thereto, stick so fast in the inmost ground of the soul, as no human force can ever pull them up. And the utmost that man can do in such a case, or where the nature thereof is set on fire of hell, is to prevent the said fire from so breaking out as to consume every thing with its flames all around; notwithstanding which force upon it, the evil fire may still keep in, and secretly burn as much as ever, and will be found to remain as under the embers, the very same it was before thus bent down. Nevertheless, it must not be denied, that this very outward suppression may frequently have good effects.

§ 45. And indeed, were not the natural life and the outward management of heavenly affairs in some sort under the check and dominion of this free-will, the

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whole race of mankind would at once be destroyed, and even by itself rooted from off the face of the earth. For although the devil has exercised an exceeding great cruelty in and over man, yet has not God suffered him to pluck up all the natural powers and affections of man's soul; seeing that there has still remained nevertheless the law of nature, and the natural love of husband and wife, with the mutual affection of parents and children; without which it would have been impossible for mankind to have subsisted.

§ 46. For whoever would fulfil all that the violent unbridled lust of his corrupt nature may hurry him to, can be no other than a pest of all human society, and must be so looked upon by all: he entirely ruins, as much as in him lies, all dealings betwixt man and man; and so runs also against the secular powers, by which he is therefore cut off. Moreover it must be wholly imputed to God's most wise and gracious council, in favour of mankind when he was fallen, that this little flame of natural love was not utterly extinguished; so that by means of this, and the sense of its defectiveness, we might again aspire and breathe after that very divine love which is altogether perfect, and which was, alas! lost by our woful apostacy: and that from the feeling of one, we might be brought a little to consider with ourselves the worth of the other; and in some sort to measure the one by the other.

§ 47. But as to spirituals, and the good things of another life, or as to what concerns the soul's true happiness and the kingdom of God, nothing can be truer than that of the apostle: "The natural man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The natural bestial man cannot know these: that is, man in his natural state has not so much as one spark of spiritual and divine light; but is wholly blind in the things that appertain to the heavenly life, and make up the Godlike state and image in the new creature. When nevertheless man was created for this very end, that he might be enlightened with the spiritual light: and that so in this light,

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with the inward eyes of the soul, he might behold God as present in him, might continually contemplate this his gracious presence and most sincere love towards him, might live with God, and might, throughout his whole life, absolutely depend upon him, and be governed altogether by his will and pleasure only.

§ 48. This being so, and the natural man not having so much as a spark of the spiritual light, which shines in the kingdom of God; it cannot be otherwise, but that all do abide in this hereditary blindness which is born with them, if they be not divinely enlightened. And much were it to be wished, that a greater blindness did not meet with this: Or that the growing power of darkness in sin, joining itself to this, did not exceedingly prevail. Which is often, alas! so very great, as even to extinguish that little weak and glimmering light of nature, which now and then may sparkle in the soul, and preside over moral virtue and outward honesty of life. And when it is so, then the soul is struck with utter blindness throughout, and is as it were wrapped up in darkness, therein forever to remain, unless Christ give her light.

§ 49. What are you then, O man, unless Christ by his Spirit regenerate you, make you a new creature, and transform you into the image of God? which, though it be in this life begun, must yet struggle under the weight of sundry infirmities. For if you look a little more deeply into yourself, who are becoming a new creature through the Holy Ghost, does it not manifestly appear, that the image of God is as yet but slightly designed and shadowed out in you, as a sort of rough draught only? Do you not see, that faith, hope, charity, and the fear of the Lord, are stinted in their growing up, as hardly able to get in you beyond the first beginnings? Do you not see, that humility is small, very small, and consequently patience very feeble; and that distrust, pride and impatience have taken much deeper rooting in your breast? Do you not find devotion weak and lukewarm; and charity towards your neighbour, if not cold, yet chill?

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§ 50. Besides, how small a spark of spiritual chastity remains in the heart; and how vast a fire of carnal pleasure? how faint the one, how strong and violent the other! How glimmering that; how raging this! Oh! with what force does it inwardly burn! How great is still self love, which lurks secretly within! How great the desire of private interest and honour! How close do they lie at heart? And how fierce is the tide of evil desires which flows in there, and overpowers the reins! From whence it follows, that to the very last breath of our lives we must continually and without ceasing, fight and wrestle, by the Spirit of God, with the old Adam, and with the image of the devil in us. While we are here, nothing else ought so much to be our concern and care, as to pray, moan, sigh, beg, seek, knock, that the Holy Ghost may be given unto us, who may abolish in us the image of Satan daily, and so again renew us after the image of God.

§ 51. From all which you can easily understand, O man! that you are never to trust to your own self; but must always and only cleave to the grace of God, stick to it, and rest upon it, that it may work in you all these things. All things are to be sought, asked and obtained from Christ, and by Christ, through faith. In him and out of him are all things to be had: The righteousness of Christ against all your unrighteousness: the sanctification of Christ against all your impurity: the redemption of Christ with his power, victory, and triumphant might, against death, hell, and the devil: the forgiveness of all transgressions against the whole kingdom of sin and Satan: and lastly, everlasting happiness, against all spiritual and bodily troubles and miseries. And after this manner, in Christ alone is life eternal to be obtained. Of which I propose to speak more fully in the second book. But before I put an end to this, I thought good that the reader be admonished of two points, which I now proceed to speak of.

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CHAP. XLII.

THE CONCLUSION.

Containing the Reason of the Method of this present Book; and shewing withal, the Absurdity of Spiritual Pride, and that the Gifts of the Holy Ghost are not to be obtained but by Humility with Prayer.

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1 COR. iv. 7.—*What hast thou, that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?*

§ 1. AFTER having treated so copiously in this book concerning the extirpation of the diabolical image in man, by faith and repentance, in order to the restoration of the blessed divine image; and shewn wherein the whole christian religion properly consists, and how it is to be distinguished from the counterfeit of it; before I conclude, it will be fit that something here be added, to prevent any misunderstanding or misapplication thereof by the spirit of man, and corrupt reason, which may tend to hinder the designed effect. For having herein laid sufficiently, as I hope, the foundation of true christianity, according to the revelation of God in the books he has himself given us, it only remains that I make for this end some few necessary observations on the whole, and admonish you, O christian, especially of one or two things, that ought most carefully to be heeded. And these are (1.) why I have so very largely treated herein upon the nature of true repentance, and what relates thereto. And (2.) why I have spoken of the divine gifts and graces in such a manner, as thereby to put them out of man's reach.

§ 2. I. In this book throughout, the true nature of repentance is fully and fundamentally set forth, together with the several fruits thereof; and is for evident reasons so plainly described and inculcated, that every one that has eyes may see, and understand, and be converted, by laying hold on the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is most freely offered him. Hence most of the

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chapters in this first book are nought else but concerning the fruits of evangelical repentance; such as renovation by Christ, mortification of the flesh, self-denial, contempt of the world, the exercise of charity, and the like. Which are no other than the elements of our common christianity, and are accordingly here treated of with all simplicity and plainness, for the benefit of beginners. And I have been purposely so copious, as even hereby to seem tedious doubtless to many, in treating of this main point, not without sundry good causes and motives.

§ 3. For, first, it is the beginning and foundation of true christianity, or of a holy life, and walking with Christ: I say repentance is the foundation of true christianity, and is, through faith and hope, the beginning of our blessedness. Secondly, no true and solid consolation can ever be felt in the mind of man, unless in the first place he understand the nature of that original depravation which is in him, and which can never be sufficiently deplored by him; and unless he be made to discern the fruits thereof, and what kind of horrible, pestilent, deadly, and diabolical poison and ferment it is, and what a seed in the soul of all evil. Wherefore when we shall have read and studied all we can, in vain and of no account to us will be all the books of spiritual and evangelical consolation, let them be written by never so highly illuminated saints, and never so excellently adapted, if we be not in the first place well acquainted with our miseries and infirmities, and know the terrible corruption that is in our nature. For the nature of man, in this fallen state, always seeks to flatter itself, and so acts most preposterously in its choice, whilst it is looking more for comfort than for cure, and is for palliating the wound, that needs to be searched into. Whereas no cure can be expected without a deep and thorough search; nor any solid consolation of the soul, without a previous contrition of the heart: which may pass for another reason of insisting so much on this grand fundamental.

§ 4. Since therefore the knowledge of your own corruption and infirmity is so absolutely necessary; it was also necessary that this, as preparatory to your cure,

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should be most clearly set before your eyes, as here is done. And since nothing is here more easy for you to fall into, nothing more grateful to your inbred corruption, and nothing on all accounts more dangerous to you, or of more fatal consequences, than self-flattery, it was highly requisite to undeceive you in this matter, and to make you truly sensible of your disease; a disease which has run all along in the blood of your ancestors from the beginning, and which by your own folly has been exceedingly heightened. And verily there is no worse symptom, than for one, where the sickness is so deeply rooted, to fancy himself well; nor can any thing in the world be more pernicious, than for you to be persuaded of the health and good estate of the faculties of your mind, which labour under the contagion of an hereditary distemper, with sundry other maladies ingrafted upon it; for there is no remedy for you: which otherwise might have been obtained with no great difficulty by an earnest application to the great Physician, who freely offers his assistance, and is both willing and able to heal you, if you will but come to him, and open your case, as is most reasonable. Which if you refuse to do, there is no hope of cure for you. Flatter not yourself; but take the bitters which are prescribed for your good: and be not earnest for consolation, but rather for purification, how sharp soever this may be. There is no saving health to be expected by any other method than this, nor true comfort to the soul without this health obtained.

§ 5. The process is here set before you at large, which you are to follow. But take heed that your own heart deceive you not, and tell you that you are in a better state than really you are. This is the ordinary reasoning of our blind and corrupt nature; and the men of the world are generally carried away with it. But to this the reasoning of the holy Scripture, and the whole tenor of God's revelation to man, is contrary: which is, that a medicine is to be prepared for the sick, not for the sound: According to that saying of our Lord, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that be sick." So then Christ, the true Physician, and the physic

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which he has prepared for you, and the cordial of consolation that is to follow upon it, can be of no use or service to you, without the discernment of your disease. This is the beginning of true repentance, which brings forth in the end solid comfort, that will never deceive you. Confess yourself then to the Physician, and so shall he heal you; for with him is wisdom and power to redeem you from all your maladies. Follow his prescripts, and never doubt. Draw nigh unto him, O penitent, and he will say unto you forthwith, "I will, be thou whole."

§ 6. Whereas now the disease which afflicts you is the flesh, which is corrupt altogether, there is the highest necessity for it to be subdued and brought under by the Spirit. Which therefore your physician wills you most strictly to observe, when you come to him. And indeed a true christian life is nought else, and can be nought else, but a continual crucifixion of one's flesh. Let the once saying of this to you be as much as if it were repeated a thousand times over and over again. For nothing can be ever more certain than that they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the passions and affections thereof. Neither can any one belong to Christ, or be a christian indeed, who composes not himself and his life accordingly. But if any one, having a just and lively sense of his own corruption, does thus order himself, and thus come to Christ, as here has been directed; he shall not be left comfortless, but shall receive into him the life-giving medicine, and obtain the sincere joy and consolation of the Holy Spirit. For all which has been here written concerning the natural man since the fall, the knowledge of his corruption and distemper, the discovery of a most effectual and infallible remedy, and the method both of obtaining and applying the same; will not fail to bring forth, by meditation of the holy scripture, most true and real comfort in the soul. Wherefore, if you will be advised by me, let this remain fixed upon your heart, and meditate continually upon the sacred scriptures, but especially upon the gospel of your Saviour: For so shall consolation meet you, when your heart is even broken with sorrow; and

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you shall be called to enter into the secret joy of the Spirit. This will bring you to Christ: fear not: and for your mourning he will give you gladness. Be then advised, and let no man deceive you, as if you ought little to regard what is here written, or as if this treatise were too severe, and not deserving to be heeded at all by you. There is no other way to the immortal crown, I assure you, but through the cross; nor to the river of pleasures which is at God's right hand, but through the valley of tears, and the shadow of death. Lo! this is the way to life, follow it. Lay up in your heart what you read, and forget not to bring it forth in your life, the grace of your heavenly Father assisting you.

§ 7. Let no man therefore divert you from prosecuting the method here laid down; let no man persuade you that the way to heaven is broader than I have described it; let no man entice you to fling this book away, because it is not eloquent, or because it flatters in nothing the corrupt appetite of your nature, which would fain be pleased and tickled with what is finely dressed up, and set off with human embellishment. For it abhors and flees from the simplicity of the gospel which is in Christ Jesus, and which consists not in word, but in power, as I have again and again observed. Matter not the foolish judgment which may be passed by any upon these elements of true christianity; because they are most unsavoury to the natural man, and therefore doubtless will be by him condemned. This, you may be satisfied of: Therefore regard not what the men of the world, or the outward and formal christians may exclaim against this, which is so little favourable to them. For however they may be conceited of their own wisdom, they are in truth the most ignorant of men, while they have no knowledge of the wretchedness and corruption of their own nature, or of what Adam and Christ are, or how Adam must die in them, or how Christ is to live in them. Because thus it must really be: Let not this therefore be held for a dream, or an imagination; take it not so by any means. I have fairly forewarned you: Be not infatuated to listen to the voice of the false and deceitful wisdom, the wis-

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dom of this world, or to be of the number of those blind kind of folks. Blind they are indeed, refusing to walk in the light, because it discovers to them manifestly their own misery and darkness. And whoever disdains this notice, it is certain that he has his mind bewildered in the darkness of ignorance: Neither does he understand what repentance is, what faith is, what the new birth is, what mortification and regeneration are, and in what points the whole course of living and real christianity is contained. And this is the first thing that I had to advertise you of, to the end you might know why I have been so very copious in treating on the nature and properties of true repentance, and the effects and fruits thereof.

§ 8. II. And the second thing that I have to desire of you is, that above all things you be mindful, in this your christian progress, to keep your heart from all *spiritual pride*; for which end you will find herein the grace of God, and the gifts of his Spirit mentioned in such a manner, as to preserve you from presuming in your own strength and natural ability. Wherefore after God shall begin, by his grace, to work in you spiritual gifts, new virtues, new habits, new sensations, and new knowledge; see that you ascribe none of all these to your own power, or wisdom, or strength; but wholly and solely to the power and wisdom of God, and to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. For while you ascribe ought to yourself, you rob God of his glory, and make the grace of Christ of no effect. Then if you hold for your own the least of that which is God's working in you, or challenge to yourself the least virtue, or the least beginning of virtue; the whole hereby is patch-work, and will never be able to pass for the righteousness of God, without which there is no acceptance. And all you bring forth, if it spring up out of your heart, with a desire of your own honour and praise, let it appear never so fair, is the devil's crop in you. All the seeming good works which you out of your own treasure produce, giving the glory not to God, but yourself, are but the tares which this your enemy has sown, and which you mistake for good corn.

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§ 9. Wherefore beware of the devil's cobwebs, and of all his devices, whose property and cunning it is, to sow poppy, while you sleep, amongst the wheat. Watch therefore, and give not place to him so much as for a moment. And by how much the more you shall have received of the heavenly gift, beware you abuse it not to your own honour, but offer all up again to the great and eternal Author thereof; ascribing to him alone, after the imitation of the heavenly hosts, all the glory, and honour, and power. It is sure, that all whatever God does is perfect, and his righteousness in the soul, is a perfect thing: and it is as sure that all you do is imperfect, lame, and defective. Let nothing therefore that is good, be ever ascribed to yourself, but let all that you do be done in the humble fear of God, and fail not to render to God that which is God's, and to yourself that which is yours; that is, all good to God, but all evil to yourself. Neither let the tempter deceive you at any time, by carrying you on high as it were through the air, and setting you as upon the pinnacle of God's temple; nor be tempted to say in your heart; "I have now a mighty faith; I have fervent charity; I have great knowledge; I have great gifts, I thank God, above this or the other person, and the like." Be not deceived; for wherein are you better than another?

§ 9. For none of these are yours, but they are God's; without whose illumination you are stark blind as to all divine things, and without whose all-quickening power, you are a dead, impure lump of earth. These gifts are no more yours, than the light and heat of the sun are the earth's which is penetrated by them. You are at the best, but the casket to hold the treasure: And no more does the glory of these belong to you, than the lustre of a jewel or precious stone belongs to the box in which it is kept. So when God places in you his jewels, as in a repository, then you shine with the lustre thereof, and are made all glorious within: but when he takes away from you these precious gifts, or when by any default of yours, you are left without them, then

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are you truly empty and void, the treasure is gone, and you are the empty chest. And is it not a great foolery and dotage, to take occasion to boast yourself of the goods of another, which are but laid up in you? which shall in the following book more fully be declared. You are to consider, that even as the Lord of a treasure may lay it wherever he pleases, and remove it hither, or thither, according as he pleases; and even as a jeweller has power to put his jewels into one, or into another box, to carry where he pleases, or to keep about him: So God may deposit his heavenly treasure in you, and take it away from you again, as he sees it convenient, and may do with his own gifts as best pleases him. Whom therefore you ought to fear with holy reverence; and with all diligence to keep yourself from spiritual pride and arrogance; which will be the inevitable loss of the celestial jewels which are given you to possess in trust. Moreover, you are to think, that Almighty God will require an exact account of all that which he shall entrust to your care and custody. Wherefore be not lifted up for what you have, but rather bow down yourself so much the more before the Almighty, and remember always, how the more you have received of God, the more will he certainly require of you. You are not to think that you have all, which may be given you, had you even the greatest and highest that were ever given to any of the saints. Ah, dear christian! be they never so great and high, they are yet but hardly the beginning, and there is a great deal, an exceeding great deal, still wanting of being full. Much, much is behind: these are but the first-fruits. Furthermore, it is your part to know and understand, that there are none of these gifts to be either obtained or preserved but by prayer. For every good and perfect gift descends from God by means of it: And without it, whatever they be that you have, they are but the shadows of these, and unprofitable dead seeds, bearing no fruits, but withering away: which is distinctly set forth in my little treatise of prayer, wherein by examples is shewn, how that without prayer, *true* prayer, no

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heavenly gifts descend into the heart of man. But that you may have some taste hereof, it will be very well for you to read and meditate what is written on this subject in the second book.

§ 11. Now there be two things which you ought constantly to regard in your prayer: First, that the image of satan may be destroyed in you; as pride, covetousness, lust, and wrath, with unbelief, and such like: And secondly, that the image of God may be restored in you, in which are contained faith, hope, and charity, with humility, patience, meekness, and the fear of the Lord. Which two, that is, the destruction of the diabolical, and the restoration of the divine image, are briefly contracted and summed up for you in the Lord's prayer. The same makes both against you, and for you. Shall the name of God alone be hallowed, and his glory exalted? Then must your name be debased, and your haughtiness pulled down. Shall you pray for the kingdom of God to come, yea, to come into you? Then the devil's kingdom must be overthrown in you. And do you desire that the will of God may be done in you? Then must your own for certain be done away, that there may remain in you no will at all but God's. Behold, these are the two parts of the *short method of prayer*, which by our blessed Lord is set us to learn, and without which, the prayer that is offered up must needs be unprofitable and ineffectual. These are comprehended in our Lord's Prayer, so far as it respects the heavenly and eternal goods and gifts, which we are directed how to seek, that so we may not miss of obtaining. For in the Lord's Prayer, there are all the treasures both for soul and body, and all the good things both of this life and of the next: It comprises all that can be desired both in heaven and upon earth, and is a certain breviary of heavenly and temporal gifts, and a most noble compendium of all that ever your heart should ascend to God for. Therefore, be not doubtful, but pray in faith, even according as you are taught by him, to whom the Father can deny nothing. For there is no question to be made, but God our Father will be most ready and willing

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to grant us these good gifts that we ask of him, if we ask for them in the very manner which his own most beloved Son has prescribed and taught us, humbly drawing nigh in his name, and taking up his words with his Spirit: And so saying,

"Our Father, which art in heaven," &c.

END OF BOOK I.

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INTRODUCTION

TO THE SECOND BOOK.

AS in nature the corruption or destruction of one thing, is the generation or production of another; even so is it in the process of the true christian life. For here the old fleshly man must be destroyed and pass away, that the new spiritual man may be produced and succeed in his place. And whereas our fleshly life is directly contrary to the holy life of Christ, as in the former book sufficiently has been declared: so must we necessarily renounce this fleshly life, before we shall attain to the spiritual life of the Lord from heaven, our great Exemplar, or can be true followers of him. As for instance, you must put an end to pride, before you can be humble; and must cease from wrath, before you can entertain meekness. And therefore must the spiritual christian life necessarily proceed out of repentance, and be generated by the true mortification of the opposite life. This, dear christian reader, was the end and design of writing for you the first book; which, both from the contents of the chapters, and from the conclusion thereof, is evidently to be seen. And forasmuch as in this second book, there will be occasion to refer to the doctrine of repentance, as it has been before laid down; it will be enough briefly herein to point to the same, that we may not be always laying again the foundation, but may go on to build upon it. Wherefore the chief design of the former book lying in the discovery and acknowledgment of the abominable, deadly, and damnable poison of our original corruption by the fall, which can never enough be acknowledged; it will be needful in this following book, to begin to treat of our everlasting well-spring of salvation, Jesus Christ, the eternally overflowing fountain of life, light, and love. In whom we find, through faith, help and cure against the

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poison and contagion of sin, and all the calamities and miseries which thence flow. This is comprehended in the three first chapters. But whereas faith, which leads the soul to this fountain, and from it produces and draws forth such good effects, must bring forth living fruits; therefore are the three next chapters spent in describing these, and in shewing how from Christ, the fountain of grace, all that is good and desireable may be derived to us. Now as the fruits of righteousness and of the Spirit, shall in us grow and increase; so must the fruits of the flesh, in proportion, decay and decrease. And this is gradual sanctification, according to the spirit, and the only, true, effectual and perfect repentance, or conversion, wherein a christian ought constantly to be exercised; not giving over till the mastery be obtained, and the life of the flesh be absolutely crucified, that so the spirit of Jesus may have in us the dominion and the kingdom. Whence it was found expedient, to give here a clear description of the difference betwixt the flesh and the spirit, of the war that is maintained by them, and of the properties of daily repentance in this warfare. Upon which the 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th, chapters wholly turn. And further, whereas out of this habitual repentance, and mortification of the old man, the new man does hence day by day succeed, it is impossible ever to find a better order or pattern, than that which our Lord Christ himself has given us; who is gone before in the way, wherein it is as much our interest as duty to walk, treading in his steps. Hence it is that the life of Christ must be our constant mirror to look on; and that thus beholding him, we should freely and readily cleave to his poverty, reproach, contempt, agony, cross, passion, and death; according as herein is declared. For this holy life of Christ is the crucifying of our flesh; and the life of a true christian should hence be nought else but a daily crucifying of the flesh, that Christ may live in him, to the glory of God. To this particularly belongs the commandment of Christ, with the exercise of his love and humility. Which is set forth at large in the following chapters.

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And upon this subjection and humility, stands our Lord Jesus Christ, as upon a true heavenly ladder, in the heart of God our loving Father, and rests in his love. Hence also must we cleave to the manhood of Christ, that so standing upon his humility, by copying it in our hearts, we may ascend likewise up into his godhead, and by love be partakers of his divine (no less than of his human) nature. Now as we behold in Christ, the heart of our most dear Father in heaven, so we behold God as the highest, the everlasting, the essential, and the infinite good; as the unmeasurable omnipotence, as the unfathomable mercy, as the unsearchable wisdom, as the purest holiness, as the unspotted and most perfect righteousness, as the sweetest goodness, as the gentlest and kindest sweetness, as the noblest beauty, as the most graceful nobility, as the most lovely graciousness, and the most gracious loveliness, and as the most joyful salvation. Which forementioned points of the contemplative life, are in the following ten chapters brought under consideration. But because no one can ever arrive to this state of contemplation, without prayer, hence therefore almost all the rest is taken up in treating concerning prayer and the exercise of divine love; or concerning patience on the cross, and the great spiritual afflictions which are in this state to be overcome. God help us, and grant that we may be all true followers of Christ, and that we may not be ashamed at any time of his holy life, but may follow the Lamb of God whithersoever he goeth, that he may lead us to the fountain of the water of life, and may wipe away all tears from our eyes! Amen.

Bernard.

Christum sequendo citius apprehendes, quam legendo.

Sooner by *following* than by *reading* shalt thou reach Christ.

Matt. vii. 14. Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

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TRUE CHRISTIANITY.

BOOK II.

INTRODUCTION INTO THE HOLY LIFE OF CHRIST,

CHAP. I.

That Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is given us by our heavenly Father for an Antidote against the damnable and deadly Poison of Sin, and the Fruits thereof; and for a Medicinal Fountain, good against all the Calamities and Evils both of Body and Soul.

ISA. xii. 3.—*With joy shall ye draw water out of the well of salvation.*

§ 1. AS our distemper is exceeding great, mortal, damnable, and out of the power of any creature to remove, it is needful that we should also have a remedy proportioned to the disease; a great, a high, a divine, an everlasting remedy and help, flowing out of the pure mercy and love of God. As our original and most fatal blow came from the furious wrath, hatred, and envy of the devil, therefore was Almighty God moved in pity to heal the deadly wound of our sin with his mercy. And whereas Satan brought his utmost wisdom, cunning, and *finesse*, and used all his politics and subtle witty inventions, that he might betray, poison, slay, and damn us: Even so has God likewise brought his highest wisdom, through his beloved Son, even all the treasures of his wisdom, that he might redeem us, heal us, and restore us to the life and happiness we had lost. Hence has he made the most noble blood of Christ the grand restorative of our nature, and the cleanser of it from all

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the contagion of sin and death, and given us his quickening flesh, with the immortalizing powers thereof, for our bread of life; his holy wounds for a sovereign vulnerary balsam in our most deplorable and wounded condition; and his precious death, for an abolition of our death, both temporal and eternal, and a complete victory over him that has the power thereof. For he will swallow up death in victory, and lead us unto living fountains of water, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb. Whence all tears shall be wiped away; and there shall be no more curse in nature; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, whereby it shall be made all paradisiacal and heavenly.

§ 2. This most costly medicine man is incapable of purchasing; and by his own skill or power, it is impossible for him ever to reach it. What then is to be done in such a case? To buy it we have not wherewithal: To take it, were it even at hand, we know not how; or if we knew, we are not able; so very infirm and weak are we in our own natures. For we are altogether sick, sick at heart; there is no health in us. We even by nature strive against this heavenly cure; and resist the remedy which should help us. Wherefore unless thou thyself, O most faithful and tender Physician, administer to me what thou hast prescribed for me, and lend thy salutary hand to reach forth to me this most precious medicine, which by thyself alone is prepared; the prescribed medicine will avail me nought, the disease will grow hereby worse, and all will be lost upon me. See then that I take what thou hast ordered, and trust me not to myself, if it be thy will that I be made whole. If thou trustest me to myself, nothing is more sure than that I am lost; for it is, thou knowest, in the very nature of my malady, to long for that which will hurt me, and to shun whatever is like to do me any good. Yea, I am abundantly more afraid of the physic, than of the disease itself. O how dost thou therefore wait upon me, O thou Sovereign Physician, that thou mayest prevail upon me to accept life! O the amazing condescension! O the astonishing patience! O the ravishing sweetness! for thee, my Lord and Prince of life and health, thus to

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wait upon such a vile and despicable Lazar as I am! But unless thou didst wait, what would become of me? Or what would become of all that thou hast done for me? Thou knowest all mine infirmity; and thy heart hath thence pitied me, and gently borne with me all this while. O bear with me yet a little longer; and leave me not, lest I perish: yea, lest I perish out of the city, the city of my God, and my name be written in the dust, with them that go down to the pit. O tarry with me yet a little longer, I pray thee; and let not my folly and my untowardness, drive thee away, lest I descend thereby into darkness, and the purchase of thy blood be lost. O let it not be! thou hast caused me to hope, blessed be thy name, that this sickness of my soul shall not be unto death, but unto thy glory. For again and again, thou sayest unto me secretly in the deep of my heart, *what willest thou?* Lord, what else should I will, but that I may receive my health? To receive health I am indeed willing; but to receive the medicine which alone can give it, I am not at all disposed. I am ready to shrink back, when I hear it mentioned. And hence I did not seek thee, but thou hast sought me: And thy will is that I should be restored; for therefore art thou come unto me. I find, alas! no disposition in me to take what thou so kindly reachest forth to me for my recovery. But dispose thou me, and I shall be disposed for it: and so manage thou my will, as it may most freely submit to thine, without the least hesitation or reserve; that so I may obtain that perfect cure, which thou art both so willing and so able to effect for me thy most unworthy patient. O sweet constraint of love, that breaks the will, and renders it purely passive! thy love and thy patience force me to yield. It is impossible longer to resist so great a love, so wonderful a patience. I must needs follow, when thou thus drawest me: I must needs obey, when thou so sweetly, so endearingly, so charmingly commandest me. For while thou drawest me with the cords of thy love, I run unto thee, in whom alone is my health; and thy commandments are sweeter to me than honey, and more precious than diamonds. But without this attraction of thine, thy commandments

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would have been bitter as gall; and the very dust of the earth would have been by me preferred before them: I should have dreaded above all things thy presence, and should always have been for running away from thee; so choosing death rather than life. O draw me therefore, that I may run after thee! O lead me to the springs of salvation, and give me of the water thereof to drink, which is able to heal all my infirmities and miseries! For thou knowest, that without thee, I can do nothing, there remaining no strength in me to help myself: To destroy myself is with me; but it is thou only, Lord, that canst restore me. Wherefore it is meet and right that I should cast all upon thee, that thou mayest in all things draw, lead, and move me, even as thou wilt; since if thou sufferest me to run after the devices of my own will, I inevitably run upon my own ruin. And if thou lettest me lie in my sickness, without due provision, that I be obliged to take such proper medicines and assistances, as thou in thy wisdom hast appointed for me; there is no remedy, notwithstanding help is so very near, but I must be forever lost. Let me not be left to my own care in this matter, but abide thou with me, and give me thyself that which is prepared for me, that so there may be no omission or mistake in the taking of it committed. Do all what thou seest fit with me, only trust me not in my own hands. In thee is all my hope. And were my heart converted unto thee as it ought, all would then go well with me, and my life would henceforth be laid up in thee, O Eternal Fountain of eternal life! Turn thou me therefore, and so shall I be turned; for thou art the Lord my God. Heal me, O Lord, so shall I be healed: help me, so shall I be holpen; for thou art the health of my life, and my glory. So long as thou keepest back thy mercy, or hidest thy loving kindness, so long remain I in my sickness, and walk as in the shadow of death. And so long as thou forbearest to quicken me with thy salvation, and to bring up my soul from the horrible pit, so long am I holden in the chains of death, and am a captive to the powers of darkness. Whence David cried out, "Make haste to help

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me: Thou art my helper and my Redeemer, O my God: Make no long tarrying."

§ 3. Ah! dear Lord! shall not thy mercy be so strong, as to raise up a poor sick man, to raise up such an one as I am; seeing that I am not able to raise up myself? Is thy mercy too weak to help such a weak one as here lies before thee? Is thy love too cold, to communicate some of its living warmth to such a miserable object as I am? Wilt not thou be so friendly and condescending as to come unto me; seeing that I cannot of myself come unto thee? Hast thou then first loved me, before I loved thee? Is then thy mercy so strong, so powerful, so mighty, as that it should even overcome thyself; as that it should be able to lift thee up upon the cross, and to sink thee down into death? Who, or what, is so strong as to overcome the strong one, with whom is all power, but thy *mercy?* Who, or what hath so great might, as to apprehend thee, to bind thee, to crucify thee, to put thee to death; but thy *love*, even the love wherewith thou didst love us when we were yet dead in our trespasses and sins? For thou wouldest rather thyself suffer death, than that we should abide in death.

§ 4. Thy mercy, Lord, hath made thee to be all ours, and given us a full propriety in thee. For us wast thou born; therefore didst thou become a little infant. For us wast thou given; therefore didst thou become an offering, O Christ, that so the Father might accept thee in our stead, and we for thy sake might have all things given us. For us a Lamb is given; for us salvation is brought forth; and therefore will we rejoice, "drawing water out of the wells of salvation," because God, even our God, hath now given us all things in thee, O Lamb of God. O gift of God to man! O great gift unalterable! Thou thyself art the giver and the gift; a communicated good, and our own proper good! Thou art ours, Lord, and therefore desire we to be thine, henceforth and forever. O the gift of a God!

§ 5. But behold here, dear christian, the wisdom of God: God has made himself, through this everlasting good thus communicated, to be properly ours, that so

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we again by the same, might be made properly his. For being purchased with a price, even a price that is inestimable, we are not our own, but his who has bought us, and has given himself for us. Whence it follows, according to the apostle, that we ought henceforth to "glorify God both in our body and in our spirit, which are God's." And as we are God's, and Christ's, as to both of these, so in like manner are God and Christ, by free gift, made to be ours. For whosoever receives any high and excellent good, inasmuch as he receives it of the giver, who has the sole and whole title to it; he thereby makes it his own to all intents, through the will and disposal of the said giver, who by the mutual acts of giving and receiving has transmitted his own right. Again, whoever possesses any good for his own, whether by donation or by any other way, he may doubtless apply and make use of the same to his own profit, in the best manner that he can. And so is Christ in like manner become ours, that we may apply and use him for our salvation, which is an everlasting profit. Wherefore see, dear christian, you can if you will, make use of him, for

The medicine of your soul, to restore you;
Your meat and your drink, to refresh you;
Your fountain of life, to quench your soul's thirst;
Your light, in darkness;
Your joy, in sadness;
Your advocate, against the accuser;
Wisdom, against your folly;
Righteousness, against your sin;
Sanctification, against your unworthiness;
Redemption, against your bondage;
The mercy-seat, against the judgment seat;
The throne of grace, against your condemnation;
Absolution, against a load of guilt;
Your peace and rest, against an evil conscience;
Your victory, against all your enemies;
Your champion, against all your persecutors;
The bridegroom of your soul, against all rivals;
Your mediator, against the wrath of God;
Your propitiation, against all your trespasses;

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Your strength, against your weakness ;
Your way against your wandering ;
Your truth, against lying and vanity ;
Your life, against death ;
For your council, when you had no counsel ;
For your power, when you was without all power ;
For your everlasting Father, when you was an orphan and desolate ;
For your prince of peace, against the adversary ;
For your ransom, against your debt ;
For your crown of glory, against your reproach ;
For your teacher and doctor, against your ignorance ;
For your judge, against your oppressor ;
For your king, against the devil's kingdom ;
For your everlasting high priest, who intercedes for you.

§ 6. Behold, dear christian, what Christ is given to you for : and pray daily, that the proper use hereby designed, may be made by you, and that in you may be fulfilled whatever is contained in any of these his relations, or his offices, for your good : but pray in faith, not doubting ; and it shall be accordingly so. Wherefore since he is your medicine, fear not but you shall be healed : since he is your bread, fear not but your soul shall be satisfied, and you shall be made to hunger no more. Is he to you a fountain of life ? then shall you be no more athirst. Is he your light ? then you shall not remain in darkness. Is he your joy, what then shall afflict you ? Is he your advocate, who then shall gain the cause from you ? Is he your truth, who then shall deceive you ? Is he your way, who then shall make you err ? Is he your life, who then shall slay you ? Is he your wisdom, who then shall be too cunning for you ? Is he your righteousness, who then shall condemn you ? Is he your sanctification, who then shall cast you away ? Is he your redemption, who then shall be able to hold you in captivity ? Is he your peace, who then can disturb you ? Is he your mercy seat, who then can call you into judgment ? Is he your throne of grace, who then shall pronounce sentence against you ? Is he your discharge and absolution, who then shall dare to

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implead you? Is it he that is your champion, and the captain of your salvation, who fights for you? Of whom then are you afraid in the battle? And who is he that shall be able to strive with you? Is he your bridegroom, who then shall snatch you from him? Is he your ransom, who will then cast you into prison, or detain you there for the debt? Is he your crown of glory, who then shall reproach you? Is he your master and teacher, who then shall correct you? If he be your judge, who shall oppress you? If he be your reconciliation, who shall be able to bring you into disgrace again with God? If he be your Mediator, who then shall be powerful enough to set God against you? If he be your advocate and defender, who shall dare to prosecute you? Is he your Immanuel, God with you, who then shall be against you? Is he your king, who then shall expel you out of his kingdom? Is he your high priest, who then shall hinder your sacrifice and intercession from being accepted? Is he your Saviour, who blesses you, who then shall unbless you? Or who shall make the salvation which he has wrought for you, of no effect? If he save, who shall damn? How can you have a greater present? It is a present greater and more worth, than yourself, than all mankind, or than all the world, and all that therein is. It is a present which is even greater than all the sins, miseries and calamities of the whole world; and which is of sufficient virtue to extinguish and annihilate them all. For Christ is all ours hereby, both as to his divine and human nature. For we having through sin lost the highest treasure, even the highest and everlasting good, which is God himself; the lost treasure God has given us again in Jesus Christ, and so therein has given us himself. Wherefore also he is called Immanuel, Isa. vii. 14. for that in him we have both a God and a brother.

§ 7. See now, beloved christian, what a great and infinite good you have in Christ, to oppose to all your miseries and calamities in this world. Did you but this once rightly understand, then would no misfortune seem great to you, then would no cross be grievous to you. Because Christ is become to you all; and in him are all things yours; forasmuch as he himself is yours: yours

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I say, not only as a crucified Christ, but also as a glorified Christ, with all his glory, and all his majesty. "For all things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world; whether life or death; whether things present or things to come. All are yours; and you are Christ's; and Christ is God's."

§ 8. O poor, miserable, reprobated, accursed sinners, as we by nature all are, how came we to be thus favoured and honoured with so high a present! with so noble and transcendent a gift! Because thou, O Lord Jesus, art to us Jehovah: Yea, thou art

Jehovah our righteousness,
A Mediator between God and man,
Our everlasting Priest,
The Christ of God,
A Lamb without spot,
Our propitiatory oblation,
The completion of the law,
The desire of the patriarchs,
The inspirer of the prophets,
The Master of the apostles,
The doctor of the evangelists,
The light of the confessors,
The crown of the martyrs,
The praise of all the saints,
The resurrection of the dead,
The first born from the dead,
The glory of the blessed,
The joy of the angels,
The consolation of the mourners,
The righteousness of sinners,
The hope of the afflicted,
The refuge of the miserable,
The entertainer of strangers,
The fellow-traveller of pilgrims,
The way of them that were mistaken,
The help to them that were forsaken,
The strength of the weak,
The health of the sick,

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The protector of the simple,
The fortitude of governors,
The reward of the just,
The flaming fire of charity,
The author of faith,
The anchor of hope,
The flower of humility,
The rose of meekness,
The root of all the virtues,
The exemplar of patience,
The enkindling of devotion,
The incence of prayer,
The tree of health,
The fountain of blessedness,
The bread of life,
The head of the church,
The bridegroom of the soul,
The precious pearl,
The rock of salvation,
The living stone,
The heir of all things,
The redemption of the world,
The triumphant conqueror of hell,
The prince of peace,
The mighty Lion of Judah,
The Father of the world to come,
The guide to our heavenly country,
The sun of righteousness,
The morning star,
The inextinguishable light of the celestial Jerusalem,
The brightness of the everlasting glory,
The unspotted mirror,
The splendour of the divine Majesty,
The image of the paternal goodness,
The treasure of wisdom,
The abyss of eternity,
The beginning without beginning,
The word containing all things,
The latitude embracing all things,
The life quickening all things,

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The light enlightening all things,
The truth judging all things,
The council moderating all things,
The rule directing all things,
The love upholding all things, And
The whole comprehension of whatsoever
is good.

Lo! here is the great and infinite gift, and divine present, which God has bestowed freely upon mortal man, out of the unsearchable depth of mercy, and love past finding out.

CHAP. II.

The true Grounds of Consolation which are in Christ to a Christian: And how every one may, and ought to apply the same to himself.

LUKE XIX. 10.—*The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*

§ 1. The *first* and chief foundation, by which is supported the universality of the remission of sins, and merit of Christ, is the universality of the extent of the divine promises; of which promises, that in the gospel now mentioned is not the least considerable. For if it be certain, that Christ came "to save those that are lost," who can ever doubt, but that he will also seek and save you, if you are of the number of *the lost?* It is also recorded in the Acts of the holy apostles, that God "commandeth all men every where to repent; because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness." Which argument is full of consolation; and is as if the apostle Paul had said, Christ will judge the world, *therefore* God commandeth *all* to repent, that they may escape the dreadful sentence of eternal condemnation. The apostle Peter likewise affirms, that God "is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Which pas-

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sages plainly demonstrate the universal grace of God to extend to you; upon which Manasses, a most heinous sinner, relying, thus prays: "Thou, O Lord, according to thy abundant goodness hast promised repentance and forgiveness, not to those who have not sinned against thee, but to sinners, that they may be saved." Whom therefore strive also to imitate. For God by such examples has declared, that he is willing graciously to receive our repentance, and save us that are unworthy, according to his great mercy.

§ 2. *Another* foundation is the *oath*, whereby God, that no room might remain for doubting, has confirmed the universal promise of his grace. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that he turn from his way and live:" (for how can he take delight in the death of a sinner, who is life itself?) "None of the sins that he hath committed, shall be mentioned unto him." Behold! God wills sinners to be converted! And do you doubt, that you, who are a sinner, are by God solicited to conversion? And the apostle Paul explaining this oath, says; "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." But if Christ came into the world to save sinners, you verily are of the number of those for whom he came. Wherefore be of good comfort, and believe.

§ 3. Moreover, that the Lord will not keep up so much as the remembrance of sins, he has no less than thrice promised: First, by the prophet Isaiah, saying, "I, even I, am he, that blotteth out thy transgressions for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Secondly, by Jeremiah, he says, "And this shall be the covenant; I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." And thirdly, by the prophet Ezekiel, in these words, "But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed,—he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him." This is the divine act of oblivion, in favour of all returning sinners, and penitent rebels, without any particular exception, solemnly declared.

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§ 4. But the cause on account of which God promises not to remember sins, is a most sufficient satisfaction and reconciliation. For what is paid, yea, over and above paid, should be altogether buried in oblivion. Now God being once perfectly reconciled and pacified by the most holy sacrifice of Jesus Christ, can no more therefore be angry, nor will he perpetually call sins to remembrance.

§ 5. Furthermore, God repeats this oath in the prophecy of Isaiah, saying, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: I have sworn by myself; the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return." Which oath, the author of the epistle to the Hebrews declaring, says; "Wherein God willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath. That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us. Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast." That is, God, by his counsel, or promise, confirmed with an oath, has more than sufficiently sealed and established his gracious will; that so none may be discouraged. And this is the second foundation for our laying claim to the consolation of the gospel.

§ 6. The *third* foundation is the eternal covenant of grace, which consists in the pardon of sins. "This shall be the covenant; I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Which covenant, or testament, because confirmed by the death of Christ, is therefore everlasting; according to that of the prophet Isaiah, "Neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee." And again, "I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David:" (i. e. Christ.) Also Moses speaks thus, "For the Lord thy God is a merciful God; he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers, which he sware unto them." And the Psalmist thus;

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"He will ever be mindful of his covenant." In which eternal covenant, that you might stedfastly believe yourself also to be contained, he has renewed and established it by baptism, which therefore the apostle Peter calls "The answer, (or covenant) of a good conscience towards God;" and therefore Christ himself would be baptized in Jordan, entering with you into this covenant.

§ 7. The *fourth* foundation is the death of Christ, by which the testament of God was ratified. But if any one should ask of me, for whom he died? The apostle Paul shall answer him, that "One died for all." And the apostle St. John "He is the propitiation—for the sins of the whole world." Likewise John the Baptist, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world." Which the apostle Paul declares in the epistle to the Romans, "As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Where the apostle makes a comparison of Christ with Adam: As if he had said, seeing the offence of Adam has made all men sinners, shall not the righteousness of Christ be far more powerful and prevalent? And if sin has abounded, shall not the grace manifested in Christ, much more abound? The same apostle being to shew that the merit of Christ is universal, and extends to all, thus reasons, "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all." But if this is true, it also follows, that God will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." Because verily Christ gave himself for all. To the same purpose is that which we have in the Epistle to the Colossians: "By Christ he hath reconciled all things to himself; whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." And that also of the same apostle; "God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all." In which number reckon also yourself, because "God is no respecter of persons." Since therefore Christ did die for sinners, you, who acknowledge yourself to be one of them, must needs have an interest in his death.

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§ 8. The *fifth* foundation is an universal call, grounded on the universal merit of Christ, which, as it was exhibited for the sins of the whole world, so it was to be preached to all creatures. Now since Christ declares, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance," it ensues, that you also, because a sinner, are called. But called to what? to repentance. And why? That you may obtain remission of sins, through faith; according to that of the evangelist Luke; "It behoved that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in the name of Christ, among all nations." And that of the apostle Paul; "The gospel, which was preached to every creature which is under heaven." But to what end was it preached? Surely for no other end, but that thereby faith might be established and perfected; according to that of the same apostle; "How then shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard?" Far be it from us to think, that God calls you in vain, or that he acts not sincerely. Surely God is not an hypocrite; but, as in a most serious affair, he does whatever is required on his part, that we may be prevailed on to embrace the proffered mercy, and accept the vocation of his marvellous grace. Hence also he is very wroth with those who make light of his supper and feast. But to these that obey his call through faith, he gives his word of promise full of divine consolation; namely, of eternal life, that is in this order to be attained. "For whosoever believeth in him, shall not perish, but have everlasting life." And he has promised that he will preserve that same faith unto the end; that is, until faith give place to vision, even to that beatifical vision which is waited for; or the salvation of the soul, which is the end of faith.

§ 9. The *sixth* foundation is the inward testimony of the Holy Spirit aspiring after righteousness in you, and by which you are sealed. This Spirit, without intermission, solicits your conscience, shakes off carnal security, incessantly convinces of sins, and sets them before your eyes, moves you to repentance, inwardly, and in your heart calls you; convincing you, striving

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with you, and leaving nothing undone that he may recal you from the by-paths of sin, to the high way of true conversion. All these things are sometimes so sensibly perceived, that you cannot conceal them, though ever so desirous of doing it. This witness of Christ in you, is never silent. And though you stop your ears, yet shall you be compelled to hear him inwardly. But if you are resolved that you will not hearken unto him, you must notwithstanding endure and feel the smart. Whence it plainly ensues, that this internal testimony, namely, that *God would have thee to be saved*, is beyond all exception; and therefore certain, evident, unmoveable, and of unquestionable verity.

§ 10. A *seventh* foundation is, the examples of sinners, whom God upon their conversion has received into favour. Surely "there is none righteous, no not one;" and not only David, Manasses, Peter, Paul, Mary Magdalen, and Zaccheus; but all of us are "sinners, and have come short of the glory of God; there is none innocent in his sight." Whatever favour God shews to one, the same he vouchsafes to all others; because "God is no respecter of persons." With him one is no better than another, and therefore all are justified of his free favour, without any merit of our own, standing all in need of pardon for sin: For "if thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?" And if thou enterest into judgment, "in thy sight shall no man living be justified."

§ 11. *Eightly*, the merit of Christ is not only sufficient, but even more than sufficient for the sins of all men, how great and heinous soever. And what folly and ignorance would it be in any, to except himself out of the number of those that are to be saved, and not to lay claim to that price, which is not only equal to, but also greater than the sins of the whole world? For, are you not a man? Do you not live in the world, that the saying of our Saviour, "The Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them," should not extend to you? Also that of the apostle Paul, "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself." And that of the apostle John, "He

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(Christ) is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world;" that is, of every individual man.

§ 12. A *ninth* foundation is, because the merit of Christ is an infinite satisfaction, beyond all number, measure and end, and that because of the person suffering, who is both God and man. Why do you therefore determine the number, measure, and bounds of so great a merit, so as to exclude yourself from it, and to deem that your sins are not therein comprehended? For, since such is the power, efficacy, and extent of that merit, that it would still be the greatest, though every man were guilty of the sins of the whole world; and as many men as there are, there were so many mortals drowned in sin; God forbid that any man should refuse to claim a right in it. This surely is that depth of the sea into which God has cast all our sins. Hence is that of the Psalmist, "For as the heaven is high above the earth; so great is his mercy towards them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." This is that eternal redemption, of which mention is made by the author of the epistle to the Hebrews. This, in fine, is what is said by the apostle Paul to the Romans; "It is God that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died."

§ 13. *Tenthly*, the obedience of Christ is perfect; because he fulfilled the will and law of his Father in all things, thereby to give satisfaction for the disobedience of every man. But if the sin and transgression of any one man were not expiated, then surely, neither were his obedience perfect, and the disobedience of Adam had been more effectual to condemnation, than the obedience of Christ to justification. The contrary of which the apostle in express words affirms. What reason is there then, that any should exclude himself from this most perfect obedience, and assert his own interest therein? Let us rather persuade ourselves, that Christ for this very end humbled himself, "and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross;" that is, unto an accursed death, "that he might redeem those who

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were under the curse of the law." In the number of whom we all surely are. For, as our first parents after the flesh, by a wicked and foolish ambition, aspired to divine majesty, it behoved Christ, the repairer of our breaches, by a most profound humility, to atone for this so great and heinous offence, and therefore to be made a curse, that the blessing might come upon all, who were cursed in Adam.

§ 14. *Eleventhly*, Since the royal victory and triumph of Christ does surpass all the multitude, the weight, and the heinousness of sin, together with all the power of death, hell, and the devil; what cause can you assign, O sinner, why the same victorious Christ may not also triumph over your sin and offences? What! can you believe that your transgressions alone are more powerful than Christ, the Omnipotent King? Who, "when he shall make all his enemies his footstool," cannot surely fail to subdue under him, sin and death. And do you think that your only crimes shall prove too hard for him? You are not surely so mad. God forbid, therefore, that you should call in question your interest in so great a conquest, and so glorious a triumph.

§ 15. The *twelfth* foundation is the everlasting priesthood of Christ. Who, therefore, to all that ask, grants pardon of sins, and the Holy Spirit to those who earnestly crave it; nor will he, or can he, refuse to any what belongs to his office. For he is the Saviour of the world and Mediator between God and man. Now if he should refuse any one that implores it, the assistance of his office, then surely would he cease to be a Mediator. But so far is he from this, that he even presses upon all sinners the benefits of his priestly office of Mediator. "Come unto me, saith he, all ye that labour and are heavy laden." And again, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the fountain, and waters," of life. Therefore, by his apostles and messengers, he invites us to be reconciled to God, offering freely to us the assistance of himself as of a mediator, seeking the lost sheep, and receiving into favour the prodigal son. Take heed therefore, O thou! whom God has made to be born a man, that you reject not, nor despise the office of Christ

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the Mediator between God and us miserable sinners, nor deprive yourself consequently of the benefit of that illustrious administration of a sacerdotal Intercessor, so every way full of divine consolation.

CHAP. III.

That Justification before God consists only in the perfect Obedience and Merit of Christ Jesus, and in the Pardon of Sins received by Faith.

ROM. v. 19.—*As by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners: So by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous.*

§ 1. AS a skilful builder, who is to raise a lofty structure, takes care, before all, to lay a very deep foundation; so the most merciful and compassionate God being to erect the royal and everlasting palace of our salvation and righteousness, thought fit to lay the foundation thereof, in the depth of his mercy, upon the person and office of his dearest Son Christ Jesus, as on a most solid stone and an immoveable rock of salvation, according to the prophecy of Isaiah, "Behold, I lay in Sion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation: He that believeth shall not make haste." Which stone Christ intimates to Peter, saying; that thereon he will build his church, which shall be so firm and stedfast, that the very "gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

§ 2. This is the head-stone of the heavenly temple; this is the rock that was preached by the apostles, Peter and Paul. This is that wonderful corner-stone, so celebrated by the psalmist. Upon this foundation, finally, has God built our righteousness, faith, and eternal salvation. For as God, our most merciful heavenly Father, has placed the ground-work of our salvation and righteousness, in the unsearchable depth of his mercy, in his everlasting love, in his well-beloved Son, and lastly, in the most tender and fatherly affection of his own heart; so he has also founded the same in the depth of our

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heart, and in the most inward and hidden ground of the soul, the very centre thereof, that through the new light and power of a divine faith enkindled in us by the holy Spirit, the righteousness of Christ only may be apprehended, and freely by the same faith, without any respect of our own works, whether antecedent or consequent, be imputed, made over, and given to us.

§ 3. To the end, that in the *first* place, by this means he might purify, and so also justify, man from the most inward centre of the soul: even as man had by Satan been infected and depraved thoroughly in all the powers thereof. For without faith, it is impossible ever to go so deep, or to search and cleanse the ground and centre both of good and evil in us.

§ 4. *Secondly*, our righteousness must proceed from faith only, because this is the work of God himself, that so our righteousness may be the operation of God only; not some external action, or hypocritical mask, like that of the Pharisees, specious in outward appearance, but not possessing the heart.

§ 5. *Thirdly*, that our heart, soul and spirit, renouncing their own human strength, upon which, through the temptation of the devil, they relied by self-love, ambition, and pride, might solely depend upon Christ alone, and upon his merit and satisfaction. Because from this alone flows the free remission of all our sins: Jesus Christ having for the sins of the whole world abundantly satisfied, and reconciled the Father. And,

§ 6. *Fourthly*, that the righteousness of Christ, by faith, might be made ours. To this end verily by his word and Spirit, he produces faith in our hearts, that thereby we may become actually possessed of this inestimable treasure. For this is the highest, unspeakable, and inconceivable consolation, that our justice and righteousness is not that of some great heavenly potentate or angel, but of Christ, and of God himself: for "It is God that justifieth." Whence, though one were guilty of the sins of the whole world, yet the righteousness of Christ is, and ever shall be infinitely more extensive and powerful. For verily, "Jehovah is our righteousness," as says the prophet. But do you think, that sin is more

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powerful than the Lord Jehovah? Has he not more than paid the debt? Would it be an insufficient satisfaction, do you think, if instead of a shilling which you owe your creditor, you should return ten thousand guineas? But such a price, and many millions greater, is paid with the blood of Christ; which therefore St. Paul calls *the blood of God*; and so great, so immense is the righteousness of Christ, which is given us by faith; that we are not hence only justified, or made righteous by Christ, but are moreover righteousness itself in him, as the same apostle teaches.

§ 7. For even as it is not enough that a defiled infant be washed, but it must moreover be wrapped up in clean linen: So Christ not only cleansed us with his blood, but he has likewise "Clothed us with the garment of salvation, and covered us with the robe of righteousness:" Both which we have received from the hand of the Lord. And this garment is by the prophet Isaiah called a *priestly* or holy *apparel;* by David, *the beauty of holiness;* by St. John, *fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of saints;* by the prophet Amos, *rivers of righteousness:* by St. Paul, *superabounding grace;* and *the exceeding riches of his grace.* By all which is signified to us such and so immense righteousness as is God himself, and which therefore surpasses even human comprehension. For though in the state of innocency, our first parents had a complete righteousness in its kind, yet was it not so exuberant, nor such as we have in Christ. For this righteousness and holiness, which by faith he gives us, is much more excellent than that which Adam, though he had not sinned, would have left us. Moreover, the profound humility and obedience of Christ was far more acceptable to God, than the innocence of Adam; so that a thousand such as Adam could not have equalized Christ alone. For however he, had he continued in the state of innocence, would have left us an hereditary righteousness, of which we should have been possessed; notwithstanding unspeakably greater and more excellent is our union with God in Christ, since he being made man, has so purified and exalted the human na-

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ture in himself, that the primitive state of Adam is not once to be compared with it.

§ 8. For as unto the human nature he once assumed, Christ remains eternally united; so all believers do in the same continue united to God, because Christ is wholly ours, as we also are wholly his. Whence it follows, that what purity human nature has in his person attained, the same purity before God has also the nature of each of the faithful. And this will appear in the transformation of our bodies at the last day, when "they shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body." But even in this life, it is said of us upon the account of faith; "Behold, thou art fair, my love: glorious, not having spot or wrinkle:" and "all glorious within, with clothing of wrought gold." In a word, our righteousness in Christ is no less immense than God himself, and equally unsearchable with him. Whence all creatures, finding nothing that can be blamed in man, must stand astonished, and cry out with admiration, "Who is he that shall accuse or condemn the chosen ones of God, whose righteousness is the Son of God himself?" And this is that righteousness of faith upon which we stand and rest, as on a rock impregnable, of which we glory in time and eternity, by which we are conquerors, and triumph over sin, death, the devil and hell, by which we tread upon the lion and adder, and trample under foot the young lion and the dragon.

§ 9. *Fifthly*, angels cannot, and much less can man be the foundation of our righteousness. For neither has an angel died for us, nor was any of the angels found able to open the book of life when it was shut: And inconstant is all the righteousness of men, which being defiled by the pollution of sin, soon tumbles to the ground; for "when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, all his righteousness that he hath done, shall not be remembered." And therefore must our righteousness be founded upon a better, yea, upon an unmoveable and eternal foundation, and must stand unshaken, "Though the mountains should depart and the hills be removed;" according to what is foretold by the prophet Daniel, "Everlasting righteousness shall be

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brought in;" and by Isaiah, "My salvation shall be forever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished." Nor surely can it be other, than a most excellent, eternal, and infinite good, which a person most excellent and eternal, by an immense and infinite satisfaction, has for us acquired.

§ 10. The *Sixth* cause why God will have our righteousness to be apprehended by faith, is his truth and promise, upon which faith rests and stands firm, and by which God has imputed righteousness to Abraham, and all his faithful seed. Whence St. Paul argues, that *our righteousness must be of faith*, that it might be by *grace; to the end that the promise might be sure.* Upon this promise therefore of grace, fulfilled in Christ, has God established our righteousness and bliss, according to what is asserted by the apostle writing to the Galatians; "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye, therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham: In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham. And thus grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." But,

§ 11. *Seventhly*, God has made his grace, and the merit of Christ, the basis of our righteousness, that Christ alone might have the honour. In him only is our help. Of our righteousness and salvation he is the Beginning, the End, and the All, "That every mouth may be stopped," according to St. Paul. Or as the same apostle says elsewhere; "By grace ye are saved, through faith; not of works, lest any man should boast." But if our righteousness were of ourselves, and from our own works and merits, then should there be no room for grace, nor should we have occasion for mercy or pardon of sin, for which every one that is holy prayeth. Moreover, there should be no place for humility, nor for the fear of God, neither would faith and prayer turn to any effect: yea, we should have no need of a Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour. Christ had then died in vain, and it would lie on us, by an external and internal

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obedience, to fulfil the whole law. We should remain under the curse, have fallen from grace, and lost Christ, as St. Paul most strongly argues in his Epistle to the Galatians: So inconsistent is the doctrine of justification by works, in the sight of God, to the foundations of the whole scripture of both testaments, and to true faith.

§ 12. In fine, that our salvation and righteousness is established upon the grace of God, and the person and office of Christ; and that we were always in Christ made righteous, good, holy, lively, blessed, and sons and heirs of God; also that the righteousness of Christ is ours, his goodness ours, his holiness ours; his life ours, his happiness ours, that lastly, the sonship and heritage of Christ is ours, and so a whole Christ, both according to his divine and human nature, is ours; (for God gives us a whole Christ for a Saviour, that he may be with his person, office, grace, glory, and blessedness, entirely ours.) This, this verily is our only and highest consolation, glory, praise, honour, charity, joy, peace before God and all the angels and elect; our highest wisdom, strength, might, victory, triumph over sin, death, the devil, hell, the world, and all enemies. For which praise be to God, to all eternity! Amen.

CHAP. IV.

That salutary Faith in the true Christian produces the various Fruits of Righteousness, arising from the most inward Ground of an Heart void of all Hypocrisy; and therefore God himself, by this same Ground, doth measure and value all outward Works.

PHIL. i. 9, 10, 11.—*This I pray, that ye may be sincere, and without offence, till the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God.*

§ 1. THE true christian by faith in Christ, is not only justified, but also made the temple and habitation of Christ and the Holy Spirit. For to this end is his heart purified of God by faith, that therein Christ may

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live and reign, namely, his charity, his humility, and his meekness. Therefore by Christ is the Holy Spirit given to him, that he may create in him a new heart, being endowed with a cheerful and ready principle of action: that, with a willingness and freedom of spirit, he may do what is pleasing and acceptable to God. Which new and holy obedience, is not of the law, or by commandment; but arises from a lively faith; St. Paul having rightly observed, that "the law is not made for a righteous man;" namely, to compel and slavishly constrain him; however it be otherwise a most excellent rule of christian life. For true and living faith does all things willingly and of its own accord; it renews the man, purifies the heart, joyfully loves his neighbour, hopes and considers the future, prays, praises, confesses, and fears God. It is also patient, humble, merciful, loving, meek, easy to be reconciled, compassionate, peaceful; readily forgives offences, hungers and thirsts after righteousness, embraces God with all his grace, and Christ with all his merit, and the full pardon of sins.

§ 2. These fruits of the Holy Spirit, together with Christ indwelling by faith, whoever perceives not in himself, let him humbly entreat God, and offer up to him prayers with tears and groans to obtain them. But this I would not have understood, as if a christian in this life, could therefore attain to perfect holiness: For even the holiest are still sensible of their infirmities, as appears from the book of Psalms, and the Lord's prayer itself. But as God would therefore have our righteousness, by which we please him, to be apprehended by faith, and has commanded it to be planted in the most inward ground of the heart, that it might not be counterfeit and hypocritical: so must all the fruits of faith and righteousness spring out of the same centre of the heart; according to which God sets a value upon them, and judges them either to be genuine, or false.

§ 3. But here again we do not assert the perfection of a christian life, but only require that a christian should walk in newness of life, approving himself by works far removed from all hypocrisy and vanity. For it is by no

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means possible, that in whom the divine Spirit dwells, the holy fruits of righteousness and of the Spirit, enumerated by St. Paul to the Galatians, should not be found: and so that a good tree should not be known by its fruits, though they may not be perfect and angelical; but polluted often, and obscured by many imperfections. This however is most certain, that all hypocrisy and insincerity is utterly to be banished hence: nor are those fruits to proceed from any counterfeited form of godliness. I do not indeed deny, but that the christian religion may be compared to an hospital, or to an house inhabited by sinners as well as saints: of whom the greater part, like children, have not yet attained to go alone; but holding by the seats or walls, learn by degrees to walk: Whence it becomes necessary to "bear one another's burdens," and never rashly to condemn those who are weak christians; but to bear with them in the spirit of meekness, to lead them again into the way, and in our neighbour's infirmities to read our own imperfections.

§ 4. But on the other hand, it must still remain an unshaken truth, that christians ought to make continual advances, and daily wax stronger in Christ: that they may not continue in a state of infancy, how difficult soever it may be to mortify and conquer the flesh. Moreover, they must study "Charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned;" and have this in perpetual remembrance, that all outward performances are valued by God according to the inward disposition of the heart. Wherefore if the heart is good, whatever you do, you may believe to be good: but if evil, unclean, and perverse, then all your works in the sight of God are hateful and extremely evil. Such as you are inwardly and in your heart, such are you accounted before God; and such are your prayers, your frequenting of public worship, your giving of alms, and your receiving the sacrament.

§ 5. Whoever therefore is desirous nicely to try himself, and his own faith, I would advise him to set the commandments of God, as by Christ himself interpreted, before his eyes, and to learn by his own heart to judge

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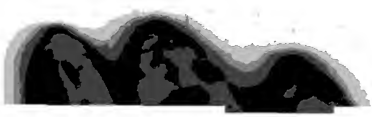
of all his actions. By this means he shall clearly perceive, if what he does, is acceptable or hateful to God, and if he brings forth the genuine fruits of that inward righteousness which is of faith. If for example you find that you defile not your conscience with external idolatry, in this surely you do well; but yet I would have you more strictly examine yourself whether you also abhor all internal idols: Or, if you carry not secretly about with you some inward idol, the object of your adoration: if you are within, what outwardly you pretend to be; or if your heart be not set upon the world, avarice, and pride: but if you find it to be the contrary, it is plain, that the outward work is of no account before God.

§ 6. In like manner you say, "I praise God, I pray, and I give thanks to him with my mouth:" But you must consider whether inwardly and in your heart, you perform the same: For if with your mouth you pray, but blaspheme with your heart, you certainly take the name of God in vain; and trifling and vain surely are all your prayers and praises.

§ 7. I keep the Sabbath, say you; and therein you do well: But look on the inward disposition of your heart: Do you therein internally celebrate the true Sabbath? Do you rest from evil thoughts and wicked desires? Is your heart, finally, devoted to God, and still from the noise of the creatures, that God may operate in you? Do you frequent the church? Well! But see you carry not with you the worm of arrogance and vanity, which inwardly and secretly gnaws your conscience.

§ 8. You perform external obedience: but does what passes within your soul agree thereto? do you all things with a willing mind? are you subject for wrath, or for conscience? Do you act from a principle of love, or only out of fear? If by this only you are constrained to an external compliance, know, that your obedience is hypocritical.

§ 9. You defile not your hands with blood and slaughter, and may think you are free of the crime of murder. But view your heart itself. For if anger burn therein, and a flame flash out upon our countenance, and break



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out into reproaches and curses, so that you say to your brother, *Racha*, and *thou fool;* then surely you are become guilty of *the judgment*, of *the council*, and *of everlasting fire*. What therefore will it avail you that your hand is unpolluted, if your heart accuses you of murder? that you slay not with your arm, if with your wrathful gestures, and as a basilisk, with your eyes, you kill your neighbour? That you smite not with your sword, if you brandish your most pernicious tongue against the reputation and the life of another? For in the heart abides the murderer, the adulterer, the thief, or the liar; the wicked beast is there, the seat of pestilence is there; there are evil desires, and the root of all mischief; which pestilential worm of the heart, if it is not killed by serious repentance, by true contrition and conversion, and by faith, and the blood of Christ, it is impossible you can do so much as any one work acceptable to God; who judges and makes account of all things by the disposition of the heart.

§ 10. Of this Christ himself gives us an example from the sixth commandment, in the gospel, saying; "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there remembrest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother;" otherwise it will not at all avail you to pray, sacrifice, worship God, and take the sacraments: yea, all these will be turned into sin, because God regards only the heart. Hence also St. Paul commands to "lift up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." And St. Peter enjoins married persons to beware of anger, and to dwell together in harmony, as heirs together with the grace of life, "That their prayers be not hindered:" therefore our most dear Lord Jesus sweetly exhorts us to brotherly forgiveness and reconciliation, by these three most weighty arguments which here ensue.

§ 11. The *first* is, "Agree with thine adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the way with him;" that is, whilst you are on this side of eternity. For our life is indeed nothing else but a perpetual travelling towards death and the grave. We are all but sojourners here,

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and are seeking therefore another country, where when we go hence we may be received. If in this life you are not set at liberty from the bonds of wrath, you will remain a captive thereto, yea, to the devil, without hope of deliverance.

§ 12. The *second* argument is: "Lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the Judge." For it is a terrible thing to be summoned to the judgment of God, and before that most severe Judge to plead our cause against an accusing adversary. For whatever is transacted, agreed, and forgiven in this life, is so also in the next. Whence it is to be understood, how much God esteems the love of our neighbour, since he permits it not to be separated from the love of himself, and therefore refuses to admit of our love, unless accompanied with that of our neighbour. For why! God is love itself, and loves man as his own soul.

§ 13. The *third* argument is: "Lest thou be cast into prison, whence thou canst not come out till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." It is agreeable to the divine justice, so to deal with us, as we have done by our neighbour, and "with what measure we have meted withal, to measure unto us again." Wherefore if you refuse to forgive your brother, the judgment of God is certain; that in like manner no sin shall be pardoned unto thee.

§ 14. You see now how the Son of God has, by an example, taught you to make an estimate of external works, by the internal disposition of the heart. Wherefore learn in like manner thereby to judge of your own christianity. But if you will say: "I am baptized into Christ, I have the pure word of God, I hear it, I receive that most venerable and august sacrament of the Lord's-supper: I also believe and confess all the articles of the christian faith; wherefore it cannot be but that all my actions must please God: Also that I am a christian in very truth, and so of course am to be saved: (For thus almost all at this day think, confining their righteousness to those things now mentioned) I will not deny, that you argue right; but this also is to be considered, if your heart agrees with your profession: For

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without this, all is mere trifling, and a hypocritical mummery. Look therefore into this, and learn to judge of yourself by the inward state. You boast indeed, that you are a christian, but see if your heart and actions agree to that most sacred name: If the Spirit is in you, the anointing, and the fruits demonstrating a true christian: This, if wanting, from the very judgment of your own heart it follows, that you are a false christian. You say, moreover, you are baptized; and so indeed you are! but take a view of the heart itself, and see if you also walk in newness of life, in continual repentance and unwearied mortification of the old man; if you bring forth fruit answerable to the baptismal covenant, and a new life once attained. You likewise say, that you have the pure word of God, and hear it. This is right: But look into your heart, and consider, if as bodily food passes into flesh and blood, so the word is converted into your life and spirit: If you have lived according to its direction: If you are made better by it: For if it is not so, whatever you do is in vain, as our Saviour sets forth by the similitude of leaven, which leavens the whole lump. Who plainly declares that, "Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

§ 15. You believe you have done all, if with a singular zeal you defend the purity of doctrine. And indeed this is not inconsiderable: notwithstanding I would have you more strictly examine, whether by the purity of doctrine, you have attained to cleanness or purity of heart? May we not find many rigid defenders of the pure doctrine, who are yet full of pride, bitterness, covetousness and other vices? The name of the Lord is a pretext and cloak to their impiety.

§ 16. You affirm that you have been often present at the holy supper, and therein you seem to glory as if all were well done. And what then? Search your own heart, I beseech you. You have often been a partaker of the flesh and blood of Christ: Why then does the flesh and blood of Adam live and reign in you? Should not the life of Christ shine forth in all your conversation?

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Should not his charity, meekness, and humility, appear in you? Or what advantage will accrue to you, if you receive Christ in the sacrament, but deny him in your life and manners? Do you find by the use of the sacrament, that you are converted into Christ; according to that sentence of St. Augustin, *Thou shalt not verily change thyself into me, but I will be changed into thee.*

§ 17. You say, that you believe and confess all the articles of faith. Very well! have recourse to the touchstone of the heart. For that only is a true and steady faith, which unites man with God, and God with man. If these effects and signs are wanting, your faith then is vain, and does not unite, but separates you further from God. This I speak, however, not of the faith of the weak, which oftentimes is not to be perceived: For this faith, however feeble, and like the smoking flax, yet cleaves nevertheless to God, and brings forth fruit even in infirmity itself. But I would have what I here say, to be understood in general, of the trial and fruits of faith. For if you believe in Christ, Christ also must be in you, and live in you. If you believe that Christ suffered death for your sins, you yourself must also die to sin, and must leave the world, with all its pride and covetousness. If this be not done, whatever you affirm of your faith, all is but a vain imagination and a delusion.

§ 18. If you say you believe that Christ was crucified for the sins of the world, yourself also must be crucified to the world. This, if you neglect, neither are you a living member of Christ united with him by faith. If you believe that Christ has risen from the dead, you must abide united to him your head, by rising spiritually from sin, or assuredly your boasting is vain. In a word: the nativity, cross, death, passion, resurrection and ascension of Christ, must be also after a spiritual and hidden manner transacted in you; otherwise, whatever you may affirm of your faith, it will prove no better than a vain and lifeless image of that which is true and living. So if you affirm that you believe in the holy Spirit, he must of necessity dwell and reign in you,

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illuminate and sanctify you. For "As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

§ 19. And therefore, O christians! let your christianity be not external, but internal; nor let it dwell only upon your lips, but in the most retired ground and centre of your heart, proceeding from a true, living, and operating faith, and an unfeigned, internal, earnest, and continual repentance. If this is wanting, all your religion will be only counterfeit christianity; you shall be able to do nothing acceptable to God; and whatever you may do here, shall avail you nothing in that day, in which God will judge of all things according to your heart. But surely, O man! if you did rightly apprehend the impurity of your own heart, you must flee without delay, to the fountain of salvation and divine grace, thence you must drink and draw, you must pray, knock, and cry, *have mercy upon me!* This being done, your heart shall be healed, your sins covered, and your transgressions forgiven.

CHAP. V.

THE POWER OF THE WORD OF GOD OPERATING IN MEN.

Shewing that it is not the Knowledge, or Hearing of God's Word, which makes a true Christian; but that he is a genuine Christian, who represents it in his Life, and prays unto God in Sincerity, that his Word, as the true Seed of God, may be quickened, and bear Fruit in him.

WISD. vi. 18, 20.—*The beginning of wisdom, is the desire of discipline; and the care of discipline is love; and love is the keeping of her laws; and the giving heed unto her laws, is the assurance of incorruption; and incorruption maketh us near unto God.*

§ 1. THIS most excellent passage chalks out the way by which we arrive at true wisdom, whereby we become the friends of God: namely, if we from our heart repent, and endeavour to lead a life conformable to the

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word of God. Such a life as this cannot but be attended with true illumination, and an increase of all divine gifts, yea, and a closer alliance to God himself, so as to be made "partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world through lust." An example of which we have in Enoch, the seventh from Adam, who having "walked with God, was not, for God took him."

§ 2. To such a life as this did David, with the utmost fervency of spirit, aspire; proposing two means of a holy life, incessant *prayer*, and the diligent *study of the word of God*. And thus he expresses himself; "I cried with my whole heart, hear me, O Lord: I will keep thy statutes. I cried unto thee, save me; and I shall keep thy testimonies." By which words the holy prophet teaches how important and difficult it is, to lead a truly christian life in actions and holy dispositions agreeable to God's word.

§ 3. For naturally flesh and blood are enemies to holiness of life. Our flesh is inconstant and weak, and ready to yield to the adverse party. The devil on all occasions perpetually opposes our endeavours. And, finally, multiplicity of evil examples, and the persecutions of wicked men, are not wanting to stop the progress of the soul in the course it has entered upon. Against these opposing evils, all the strength and powers of the soul are to be called up, after the example of holy David, who cried unto God with his whole heart, to enable him to lead a holy life, according to his word, and to perform all the divine will, that so he might continue in the favour of God once bestowed upon him. Which surely should also be our chief care, preferable to that of all worldly things whatever. For whosoever has the favour of God, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, cannot be hurt by any worldly enmity or opposition. Wherefore serious and fervent prayer is, as I have said, the first step to a holy life.

§ 4. The second is by the royal prophet insinuated in these words: "I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried; I hoped in thy word: Mine eyes prevented

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the night watches, that I might meditate in thy word." In which words are declared, as well the earnest study, great love, and ardent affection due to the word of God, as also the time best suited for meditation therein, such as is that of the morning. In this, as the faculties of the mind are most vigorous, so they are most capable of searching deeply into divine subjects. The truth of which is most convincingly perceived, when the soul, under spiritual temptation and sadness, as they that watch for the morning, with *waking eyes*, expects help from God, hoping for consolation, and watching *as a sparrow alone upon the house top*, and a melancholy *owl in the desert;* and finally, *so weary with its groaning*, that it is almost even ready to expire.

§ 5. And this is that exercise of the cross which is peculiar to all the saints. He who is not enured to this must needs know but very little of the word of God. By this all the natural powers of our soul and life are baffled, that God alone may become the strength of the faithful; and that by this same cross our carnal life being mortified, he only in us may live and diffuse the quickening power of the word. And verily this one thing all ought to endeavour; to this should all our religion tend, that our life and actions may be agreeable unto the word of God.

§ 6. This doctrine, therefore, I would have deeply rooted in your mind; namely, that not the knowledge or hearing, but the doing of the word of God, demonstrates a true christian. The reason is because otherwise the word of God is to us of no advantage. For this was not therefore committed to writing, that it might be read and known only, but that it might be reduced into practice. For even as a medicine can bring no relief to the patient, which he only hears of, or looks upon with his eyes, but refuses to use, just so the word which is given us of God as a remedy, for the cure of our depraved nature, will make no man the better, or restore him from death to life, if he square not his conversation according to it. But in order to this, it is useful and necessary, earnestly to cry to God night and day for grace, that what you are taught in the word, you may be able to perform in your

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life and actions. What, I pray, does it advantage a craftsman, that he knows an art, and does not exercise it? Will he not, by his supine negligence, at length be reduced unto poverty? So what will it avail you to know the word of God, and not to do it? "That servant (says our Saviour,) which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes." And the apostle Peter makes no scruple to affirm, that "it had been better for such not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them."

§ 7. Moreover, as a father acknowledges him not for his son, who in all things acts contrary to his will; so not words, but the life and actions demonstrate the sons of God, according to that of our Saviour, "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me,—this did not Abraham.—Ye are of your father the devil." Whence it manifestly appears, that of his nature we partake, and his sons we are, whose works we follow. What avails an unfruitful tree, that to no purpose takes up room in a ground or garden? nothing: It is surely fit for nothing, but to be cast into the fire, as is represented in the parable of the barren fig-tree.

§ 8. As it would be deservedly accounted ridiculous, and a sort of doating, to give unto a raven the name of a swan, to which it has no manner of a similitude; so if, after considering the present lives of men, one should call those of this age by the name of christians, without any regard to their life and manners; might he not justly be accused of egregious folly? For by the actions and performances, not words, is a christian life to be estimated, according to that of St. Paul, "For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." But such is the state of most men at this day, that those who make the strongest pretences to the christian name, act nothing that becomes a christian; like those at Rome of old, of whom Laurentius Valla, reading these words of the evangelical history, "Blessed are the merciful, blessed

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are the peace makers," &c. said, "Surely either these words are not true, or we are not christians."

§ 9. There are certainly brute creatures, not a few, that surpass man in virtue. Thus the dove excels in harmlessness; the ant in industry; the stork in the careful nourishing her parents; the crane in vigilance; the dog in love and fidelity; the ox and ass in knowledge of their master; the sheep in meekness; the lion in generosity and clemency towards the weaker and smaller creatures; the cock in cheerfulness; the serpent, finally, in wisdom: On the contrary, man in his natural state, outvies all the beasts in malice; and is more fierce than the wolf; more crafty than the fox; more stately than the peacock; more voracious than the swine; more pestilent than the viper; more cruel, in fine, than the bear. Whence the pharisees are by John Baptist called, *a generation of vipers:* Herod, by our Saviour, *a fox;* and St. Paul terms Nero *a lion.*

§ 10. Yea, these vices and mischiefs which go single and unaccompanied in brutes, each species of which has its peculiar, are oftentimes found altogether in one natural man. So that the human body is very significantly called by the apostle Paul, *the body of sin*, as it were full and thoroughly polluted with all kind of sins. Not to mention that there is no creature so pernicious, but that it is still of some use, as foxes and wolves for instance, with the skins and furs of which men are secured from the injuries of a rigorous season. But alas! what good is there to be found in a man abandoned to the conduct of nature only? "Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually," as it is represented in scripture. He exercises his reason to practise fraud, corrupts his body with pride and lust, and both inwardly and outwardly is so altogether depraved, that all his members are the instruments of unrighteousness. Hence it is, that in the sacred scriptures our nature is represented and set before us in such ugly and foul colours. "There is none righteous, no not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not

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one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit, the poison of asps is under their lips. Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood. Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes."

§ 11. Behold here the deplorable image of the animal man! Behold here the abomination that is natural to us all! tell me then whether a man can see the kingdom of God, unless he be born again from above; and according to that of St. Paul, "be renewed in the spirit of his mind: putting on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness, and true holiness?" And again, the same apostle says: "But ye have not so learned Christ, if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus." Yea, further he says: "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Good God! If those belong not to Christ, who mortify not the members of unrighteousness, but live in the pollutions of sin, then they must needs belong to the devil, and be without all hopes of the heavenly kingdom, who crucify not their own flesh. For whoever desires to please God, must become a new creature in Christ, "In whom neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." And seeing it is so, let this be our chief and only care, that we may daily more and more mortify sin in our mortal body, and be members, not of Satan, but of Christ. Let us earnestly endeavour, that the word of God may be fulfilled and quickened in us, and striving to render our life acceptable to God, we may never fall short of his grace, and so may finally become vessels not of wrath, but of mercy.

§ 12. And therefore it is, that David, from the very bottom of his heart, wishes to lead a life holy, and conformable to the word of God: "I cried, (says he) with my whole heart; hear me, O Lord: I will keep thy statutes." For seeing our conversion is from above only, then must a holy life be needs obtained by continual prayers and supplications. "Heal me, O Lord, (says

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the propnet Jeremiah) and I shall be healed ; save me, and I shall be saved : for thou art my praise." And David again : "I cried unto thee, assist me, that I may keep thy testimonies." For certainly, sin and the kingdom of the devil, are more powerful in man, than to be conquered without the divine support and assistance.

§ 13. Let us therefore put far away from us all negligence, and shaking off all remissness of mind ; let us acquit ourselves not slothfully, but diligently, in a matter of so great importance, as David himself further adds : "I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried : I hoped in thy word. Mine eyes prevented the night-watches, that I might meditate in thy word." And the prophet Isaiah makes use of words most worthy our observation : "He wakeneth me morning by morning : He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned." To which that of Solomon is not unlike : "I sleep, but my heart waketh : It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh," and the like.

§ 14. In which words, besides other things, is insinuated the fatherly care and love of our God : seeing his chief delight is, to be conversant with the sons of men, to speak with them, and to instruct and teach them. For which cause also he appointed his Son to be our heavenly Teacher and School-master. And hither may most conveniently be referred that most illustrious example of the child Jesus teaching in the temple, and recorded by St. Luke the evangelist. It is not to be thought, that this was performed by our Saviour, only on account of the Jewish temple, now destroyed ; but let us rather believe, that this was done on account of the christian church itself, which being the true and heavenly Jerusalem, is only by his word and Spirit to be taught and instructed. This was done also with regard to our hearts, in which he will teach us, comfort us, enlighten us, and sanctify us ; in which, moreover, he will pray, ask questions, answer them, and speak by holy thoughts, devout meditations, and heavenly inspirations : In which the doctrinal office of Christ consists. Whence also he returns his mother these words full of consolation : "How is it that ye sought me ? Wist ye

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not that I must be about my Father's business ?" meaning by his Father's business, his vocation and office conferred upon him by his Father. Which office even at this present he performs at the right-hand of God, as our true and only high-priest. But in the earth he discharges it by his word ; by which also he preaches inwardly in our hearts, by means of the Holy Spirit and his gracious illumination. And without this inward preaching of the word, the outward must needs prove barren and ineffectual, according to that of the apostle Paul : " I have planted, Apollos watered, but God giveth the increase. So then, neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase."

CHAP. VI.

THE HAPPINESS OF A SOUL UNITED WITH CHRIST.

Shewing that in Union with Christ by Faith consists the Happiness and Perfection of Man. To which Man is so far from being able in the least to add, that by the Perverseness of his Will, he rather hinders the Divine Grace ; Christ only working all in us.

JOHN XV. 5.—*Without me ye can do nothing.*

§ 1. AS man by defection from God, through ambition and self-love, was separated from him, and fell from the perfection in which he was created ; so he must of necessity return to that original tranquillity and happiness, by union with God : for therein the whole of human perfection consists. Therefore was it necessary, that the Son of God should become man, that the human nature being again united to God, might thereby be restored to its primitive integrity and perfection. For as the divine and human natures are personally united in Christ, so should we all through grace be united to him by faith ; that the exceeding corruption of our depraved nature, be rectified by the greatest and abounding good. Hence the Son of God himself says : " I

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will betroth thee unto me forever, in loving kindness and in mercies." For since, as was now said, our nature is infected and corrupted by sin, which is the worst of evils, it could not be amended and restored, but by the greatest good, which is God himself.

§ 2. But as the union of the divine and human nature in Christ is eternal, and can never be dissolved, insomuch that even death itself could not break this bond asunder: So Christ, our head, ought to be so united with his believing members, that neither life nor death may be able to divorce them from him. Which also is, by the prophet Hosea, declared (as before) in the person of Christ: "I will, (says he,) betroth thee unto me forever."

§ 3. This union by faith is of the highest necessity, because "our iniquities have separated between us and our God:" In which forlorn state we should remain forever, did not Christ by faith, take up his habitation and live in us. Moreover, we are not able to do any good, unless Christ work it in us; according to that of St. Paul: "Not I, but the grace of God;" and also that of St. John: "Without me ye can do nothing:" Which last proceeds to illustrate the truth of what he had said by the most apposite similitude of a vine and vine-branch. Whence it naturally follows, that if at all, we either are or do any good, it is altogether to be attributed to God alone; according to what is said by the prophet Isaiah: "Thou also hast wrought all our works in us;" and by the prophet Hosea: "I am like a green fir-tree; from me is thy fruit found."

§ 4. Here now, O man! consider what you are, and what you can do: What have you been able to contribute to your restoration and the renovation of your depraved nature? Surely, as you could not afford any help towards the generation, or nativity of your body, nor create yourself; so neither can you bring any assistance towards your new birth, or regeneration in the spirit. You may, indeed, lose, damn, and destroy yourself; but to renew, to restore, to heal, to justify, and to enliven yourself, is a work entirely beyond your strength. Could you at all conduce to the incarnation of God?

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Nothing, verily. There is nothing therefore that you can arrogate to yourself, or ascribe to your own power. For the more a man is disposed to attribute any thing to his own will, strength, and ability, the more effectually he obstructs the divine grace, and the repairing of his corrupted nature. Let us then carefully remember, that we must renounce our own strength, our own wisdom, our own will, and self-love, and, being thus altogether resigned to God alone, suffer his power to work all things in us, so that nothing may in the least oppose the will and operations of the Lord.

§ 5. For until it come to this pass, that your mind be merely passive, or that you permit God to act all things in you, O man, so that you purely suffer his operation and will, it is evident, that God is hindered by you, to unite himself with your soul, to renew his image in you, and to amend the pravity of corrupt nature. For our own will, self-love, ambition, opinion of our own wisdom, and whatever else we arrogantly claim to ourselves, are so many impediments; because of which, God cannot consistently operate in us according to his own desire. And as the human will corrupts a man still more and more; so the divine will does still more and more perfect, and restore him.

§ 6. Hence it is said by Bonaventure, that *the highest perfection of religion consists in forsaking our own will.* And by St. Augustin, *If to love God is the greatest good of a man; to love himself must needs be his greatest evil.* And, *if such is the nature of good, that it diffuseth and communicateth itself, of necessity self-love must be a great evil, that draweth unto itself both its own and the goods of others, and will not part with any of them.* Of this even Seneca himself was not ignorant, when he says; *that only is an accession to virtue, which is a subtraction from thy own will.* Also, *unless thou departest from thyself, thou canst not approach unto God, who is above thee.*

§ 7. Indeed our own will is nothing else but defection from God. Defection verily is easy, smooth, ready, and pleasant: but the recovery from it, is bitter, troublesome, and of extreme difficulty, yea, even beyond all

the power of the creature. For man by his own strength cannot return, nor yet help himself, whether in will or in deed. The will is captive, and our works dead. Wherefore it is Christ alone that can give assistance, let it be in the beginning, progress, or end. And here he lays before us two means, the *law* and the *gospel*, or repentance and remission of sins. Through the law, in the first place, you must die together with Christ, and by true sorrow and brokenness of heart, sacrifice your own will, become vile in your own eyes, and resign up yourself wholly to Christ. This being done, grace and forgiveness of sin is bestowed through the gospel, and man that is dead, is raised up by faith. Whence verily, it appears, that no man can by his own strength convert and quicken himself. For it is of absolute necessity, that he hate, deny, and lose himself, that he be displeased with, and die to himself, and that his hope be placed entirely in God alone, by whose grace he must live.

§ 8. But this self-hatred, denial, and mortification, is not an effect of our own will and power, according to that apostolical oracle : " It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." It is God therefore who must operate all these things in us by his grace, and the power of his Spirit. So that our justification is not from any creature, but from God alone, whose work and gift it only is. For as to ourselves, it is certain, that the most dangerous enemy any man has, is himself; insomuch, that we have great reason to supplicate the Lord, to deliver and rescue us from ourselves, to take from us what is ours, and to give us the things that are his. For by our own strength, we are not able to do any good, if God himself, even after conversion, do not work it in us. Who is it that can give charity and the other graces, but he only who is love itself? It is certain therefore, that these things are effected by the help of Christ only, all human endeavours being utterly vain. Now man in Christ is again restored to that state from whence he departed by the transgression of Adam ; yea, and is exalted to a much higher degree of dignity and happiness. Of which more hereafter.

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CHAP. VII.

That to the right Understanding of the Nature of Spiritual Renovation, there is required the Knowledge of the Difference betwixt the Old and the New Man.

ROM. vi. 6.—*Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him; that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*

§ 1. EVERY christian is twofold, and in him is to be found a twofold man, opposite the one to the other, with their suitable operations, as may plainly appear from the following table:

Adam,	*Christ*,
Old man,	New Man.
Outward man,	Inward Man.
Old birth,	New Birth.
Flesh,	Spirit.
Nature,	Grace.
Reason,	Faith.
Darkness,	Light.
Tree of death,	Tree of Life.
Evil fruit,	Good Fruit.
Sin,	Righteousness.
Damnation,	Salvation,
Death,	Life.
Old Jerusalem,	New Jerusalem.
Kingdom of the devil,	Kingdom of God.
Seed of the serpent,	Seed of God.
Natural man,	Spiritual Man,
Image of the earthly,	Image of the heavenly.

§ 2. The truth of this table, the scripture, as well as experience, abundantly confirms. The former speaks largely of the old and new, and of the inward and outward man. See Eph. iv. 24. Col. iii. 9. 2 Cor. iv. 16. It teaches also that the spirit of God is in us: Rom. viii. 11. 1 Cor. iii. 16. vi. 19. 2 Cor. v. 5. Eph. i. 13. And likewise Christ, Gal. ii. 20. 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Ex-

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perience moreover demonstrates the same. And hither may be referred that struggling of the flesh and spirit, from which even the saints are not free, Rom. vii. 23, and the different fruits of the flesh and spirit, enumerated by St. Paul in his epistle to the Galatians, chap. v. from verse 19, insomuch that this doctrine is beyond controversy, and too certain to be questioned by any christian. For this is the hinge, as it were, and foundation of all the scripture, and thereon depends the true knowledge of man.

§ 3. Out of the same fountain issues true repentance, or the death of Adam, and the life of Christ in us. For when Adam dies in us, then together with him dies whatever is derived from Adam; the old and outward man, the old birth, the flesh, nature, corrupt reason, darkness, the tree of death, evil fruits, sin, death, damnation, the seed of the serpent, the natural man, the earthly image, the old Jerusalem, and the kingdom of the devil. But when he is alive, then together with him lives also and reigns in us, the old man, and the carnal birth, with the flesh, nature, darkness, and the whole train of evils beforementioned, being all comprehended under the kingdom of the devil. All which are under damnation, and the curse everlasting.

§ 4. But if on the other hand, Christ lives in any one, then verily together also with him, live and bear rule the new and inward man, the new birth, the spirit, grace, faith, light, the tree of life, good fruits, righteousness, life, happiness, the seed of God, the spiritual man, the heavenly image, the new Jerusalem, and the kingdom of God. All which belong to the divine blessing and eternal salvation. And herein is all the difficulty, namely, so to order it, that Christ the New Adam only, and not the old Adam, may live and reign in a man.

§ 5. Hence therefore, it is necessary for a man to watch, to fast, to pray, to fight, to strive, and as St. Paul expresses it, "to examine and to prove himself if Christ be in him; to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling;" to walk through the strait gate and narrow way in Christ; that is, to hate and deny himself, to forsake all and die unto sin. Which surely is not to be

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done, as the nice and delicate persons of this age may imagine, by any careless and slight application of mind, but with inward and profound sorrow, contrition, and wailing, with groans and tears not to be expressed by words; as the royal psalmist often witnesses. This the apostle Paul terms "crucifying of the flesh, with the affections and lusts." This when it is once attained to by a man, then in him verily Christ lives, reigns, and conquers, and he reciprocally in Christ by faith; suitably to that of St. John, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

§ 6. Now seeing the world which you are to fight against, is not without you, but within you, it follows that it is to be conquered also not without, but within you. For what is the world, but "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life?" Which as they are in you, so in you they are to be subdued, that hence you may worthily bear the name and character of a true child of God. "For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world." Thus you shall indeed become a child of light, a member and sheep of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Ghost; and shall be as a good tree, that willingly (without law and constraint) yea, with joy, love, and pleasure, brings forth good fruits.

§ 7. But if you live in Adam, and Adam live in you, then are you not a son of God, nor begotten of God. For seeing you are overcome by the world, and the prince of this world, his pride, ambition, and self-love which rules in you, you are on this very account to be numbered amongst the children of the devil. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." And on the contrary, as many as are led by Satan, or by the spirit of the devil, they likewise are his children; yea, they are very members of the devil, sons of darkness, an habitation of unclean spirits, a cursed Babylon, full of impure and of abominable beasts and vermin, prefigured by the ancient prophets; but particularly by the prophet Ezekiel, who, being brought in spirit unto the temple at Jerusalem, saw amongst others, two things most remarkable: and 1st, Every form of

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creeping things, and abominable beasts, as also all the idols and abominations of the house of Israel portrayed upon the wall round about. And 2dly, which was much more detestable, Seventy men of the elders of the house of Israel, paying their adorations to these images and beasts, with incense and sacrifices."

§ 8. Behold here the representation of your old Adamical, brutish, and beastly heart! Into this temple of your heart, if you will be pleased to enter, you will surely find therein vast numbers of foul, detestable creatures, images, and idols, fashioned and represented by the impure thoughts in the carnal mind, imagination, and memory. Moreover, (and which is yet by far a greater abomination) whereas these idols and execrable things, should be utterly banished from the heart; and this detestable evil, whereby man is made the habitation of unclean and pestilential vermin, which he long ago ought to have destroyed by repentance, and killed by mortification of the flesh, should be lamented with most bitter tears; you will, on the contrary, perceive, that you love these serpents, that you adore these vile monsters, and delight in them; and but little regard all the while, that Christ by these abominations be thrown out of you, and banished from your heart; and you by this means be deprived of the supreme and eternal good, losing the Holy Spirit with all his inestimable gifts.

§ 9. Miserable, unspeakably miserable, surely are you, who can be exceedingly grieved, if you but fall into any outward trouble, or lose any thing in the world that is dear unto you! With what stupidity therefore of mind are you possest, who are not at all afflicted with the loss you have sustained even of Christ himself, and with the deplorable state of your soul and body, which both are now become, alas! a habitation of malignant spirits? And hence, if you but seriously consider, you shall soon understand, what Adam, and what Christ is; as also how they are and live in us. Hither also we may refer the following observations:

§ 10. First: In Adam we are all naturally equal, nor is one better than another; seeing we are all, both as to body and soul, equally polluted and corrupted; both

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Jews and Gentiles. Hence also it is most true, that in the sight of God, no man is better than the most profligate criminal. For though the wickedness which is natural to all, does not equally in all put forth and break out into works; yet God judges all men by the inward state of the heart, the poisoned fountain of sin. Neither is there any sin so horrid and vile, which man by nature would not be guilty of, were he not restrained by divine grace. For by the bent of our nature we are only inclined to pollute ourselves with all manner of wickedness: which inclination, if it be not always attended with the external effect itself, it is wholly to be attributed to the grace of God, and not to any strength of ours, or human precaution whatever. This consideration should excite us to humility and an unfeigned fear of God, restraining us at the same time from rashly despising our neighbour, lest, by reflecting on others, we split ourselves upon the dangerous rock of carnal presumption.

§ 11. Secondly: It is convenient to observe, that as in Adam, and by nature, we all are equal, without any difference, as to the corruption of nature; so by Christ also we are all made equally just and holy, no man receiving for himself any prerogative of peculiar righteousness, in the sight of God. For since Christ is our perfection, our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, we, who in Adam are alike, are alike also in Christ. For as in Adam by nature, we all are one man and one body, infected with the highest contagion of corruption and disobedience: So all the faithful are as one man in Christ, and resemble one body completely purified and sanctified by faith, and the blood of Christ.

§ 12. Which doctrine, as I have already said, is a remedy against spiritual pride, that none may account himself better in the sight of God than others, however haply he may be endowed with greater gifts; which are no less of pure grace bestowed on him, than even righteousness and salvation itself. Upon this principle of pure grace, be careful to fix your meditation: Which if you do, then this same grace shall protect you against

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the dangerous snares of pride and arrogance: And as on the one hand, it will convince you of your own misery and poverty in spirit; so on the other, it will give you a most lively discovery of Christ, and of the exceeding riches of grace, through him derived to mankind.

CHAP. VIII.

God most affectionately invites to Repentance; which is by no Means to be neglected or delayed.

LUKE XV. 10.—*Likewise I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth.*

§ 1. God, who is of infinite mercy, that he might the better soften our hard and stony hearts, and turn them from the world, ourselves, and the devil, unto himself; has in his word variously represented and set before our eyes man's conversion and repentance.

§ 2. Amongst other ways of setting it home upon us, these two parables of the lost sheep and the lost son, are exceedingly remarkable, and so abounding in consolation, that without tears it is scarcely possible seriously to think upon them. For therein our Saviour lays down a most lively description of *three* different hearts. Of which the *first* is the impenitent heart of a sinner. The *second*, the contrite heart of a penitent. The *third*, the heart of God yearning with paternal affection.

§ 3. The *first* he describes under the similitude of a degenerate son, wastefully spending his substance and inheritance, and at last reduced to such necessity, as to wish, that he could with the swine be looked after, ready to fill his belly with husks. By this figure, all mankind in their natural state are represented; who, as so many flagitious sons, and most grievous sinners, have squandered away the heavenly inheritance, by all manner of wickedness; that is, making shipwreck of righteousness, holiness, innocence, and the most beautiful image of

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God, in which they were created, are by their own fault, become the bondslaves of sin, of the devil, and death: And to complete their misery, finding no relief, rest, or comfort, in any human performances and laws, (which answer to the husks in the parable) must of necessity perish by a famine never to have an end, unless they have recourse to the grace of their heavenly Father.

§ 4. The *second* heart, which is that of a repenting and grieving sinner, is set forth in these words: "How many hired servants of my father, have bread enough, and to spare, and I perish with hunger? I will arise, and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." In which account we have a most lively description of repentance. For by his *coming to himself*, contrition of spirit is signified; when man reflects upon his own misery, and considers how of a son of God, he is become a beast, an unclean swine, a man void of reason, brutish, earthly, and sensual: And afterwards, mindful of his original, he turns his thoughts upon his Father; and repenting and acknowledging his offences, he says: "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee," offending both God and man. Which straightway he confirms by his disdaining and contemning himself, which he thus expresses: "And am no more worthy to be called thy son." Moreover, faith, the other part of repentance, is represented to us, when it is said, that the son arose, and took confidence to come to his Father, with a firm persuasion, that his Father would entertain him, if not as a son, yet as one of his hired servants: For he says, "I am no more worthy to be called thy son, make me as one of thy hired servants." Which plainly shews the strong hope he had entertained, that his Father would yield to his entreaties, and receive him into his favour at last.

§ 5. And now I come to the delineation of a *paternal heart.*

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* "When he was yet a great way off, his Father saw him." Behold the preventing mercy of our heavenly Father, viewing a degenerate son with the ravishing glance of his most lovely eyes.

† "And was moved with compassion:" Hereby is represented his mercy waiting to be gracious.

‡ "And ran, and fell on his neck:" Here is mercy receiving into favour.

§ "And kissed him:" This exhibits mercy administering consolation.

‖ "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him;" This has relation to Christ, and points out his gratuitous righteousness, and justifying mercy.

¶ "And put a ring on his hand." Hereby is signified the holy Spirit, the earnest of the inheritance, the pledge of sonship, the seal of his intimate favour and union, and represents to us espousing mercy.

** "And shoes on his feet:" that denote a new and holy life in Christ, by the divine power and the grace of the holy Spirit: which are the peculiar effects of confirming mercy.

†† "Bring hither the fatted calf:" by this feast is represented the joy of the angels, or enlivening, rejoicing, and crowning mercy, described by the holy psalmist, and the prophet Isaiah.

§ 6. Now, how weighty arguments are these of the divine goodness, inviting us to repentance? Go then, and let us consider diligently some of the inducements to repentance. Of these the principal are seven:

1. The boundless mercy of God.
2. The grace and inestimable merit of Christ.
3. The dreadful threatenings and punishment.
4. Death.
5. The last judgment.
6. Hell torments.
7. Everlasting joy.

* Præveniens misericordia. † Expectans misericordia. ‡ Suscipiens misericordia. § Consolans misericordia. ‖ Justificans misericordia. ¶ Annulus Filialitatis, *vioθεσιας*; despondens misericordia. ** Confirmans misericordia. †† Convivium & gaudium Angelorum. Vivificans, lætificans & coronans misericordia.

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1. *The mercy of God.*

§ 7. Deut. iv. 29 : " But if thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thine heart, and with all thy soul : when thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee ; even in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice (for the Lord thy God is a merciful God) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers, which he swear unto them." What a tender affection of a father's heart have we here presented to us ! and how just is it, and reasonable, that it should move us to repentance ! for how numerous and great soever are our sins, greater still is the mercy of the Lord ; according to that of the royal psalmist : " With the Lord there is mercy ; and with him is plenteous redemption." And again : " According unto the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions."

§ 8. Nor are sins so filthy and abominable, but God can make them whiter than snow. " Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow," says the prophet Isaiah. And the psalmist : " Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean : wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Neither are they so various and manifold, but that they are surpassed by the riches of the divine grace, according to the apostle Paul : " In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins ; according to the riches of his grace." And what we have in Exodus : " The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth ; forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin." Nor yet are they so strong and powerful, but God can extinguish them, and throw them into the depth of the sea, as he did Pharaoh with all his army, suitably to the prophet Micah. Nor, finally, are they so deadly and pestilential, but God can heal them, as in the prophecy of Ezekiel : " The wicked shall not fall by his wickedness in the day that he turneth from it."

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2. *The grace of Christ.*

§ 9. How kindly and lovingly Christ Jesus receives sinners, he shews himself in the gospel of St. Matthew: "They that be whole, (says he) need not a physician, but they that are sick. For I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." And in that of St. Luke: "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Of this gracious bounty of our Saviour have the prophets prophesied. "Wo be to the shepherds of Israel, (says the prophet Ezekiel,) who have not sought that which was lost: but with force and with cruelty, have ye ruled over them. And they were scattered, because there was no shepherd. Behold I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock, in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick." And the prophet Isaiah says: "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom."

§ 10. Nor should the gracious nature of Christ only move you to repentance, but more especially his extreme sorrow and most innocent blood shed for you. Consider, I beseech you, that he laid down his life, not for heaven or earth, but for your own soul. Wherefore then do you not cease by your impenitency, so shamefully to squander away so great and valuable a treasure? Remember that you could not have been redeemed by any other price than the precious blood of Christ. Why then should you not endeavour, with the greatest care, that you fall not short of a redemption of so inestimable a value? Call to mind, that Christ has delivered you from the world, sin, and the devil; which therefore you should no longer desire to serve. Assure yourself, that without repentance, the merit of Christ will avail you nothing, "who tramplest under foot his blood, and dost despite unto the Spirit of grace." Think, finally, how sharp and cruel sufferings your Saviour underwent on your account! How he wept, sorrowed, trembled,

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and greatly feared; how grievously "he was wounded for our transgressions," and, at last, as a worm and curse, did hang upon a tree.* O most sad sight, and deplorable mirror of repentance.

3. *Threats of temporal punishment.*

§ 11. "God judgeth the righteous, (saith the psalmist) and God is angry with the wicked every day. If he turn not, he will whet his sword: he hath bent his bow, and made it ready: He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death: He ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors." This wrath and revenge, no man certainly will ever be able to escape, as says the prophet Amos: "He that fleeth of them shall not be delivered. Though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down. And though they be hid from my sight in the bottom of the sea, thence will I command the serpent, and he shall bite them. Behold the eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth." "Their blood shall be poured out as dust, (saith Zephaniah) and their flesh as the dung. Neither their silver, nor their gold, shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy." Which dreadful threatenings should awaken us into an unfeigned sense of repentance; this being the only means, to prevent the impending desolation of the earth, and the total destruction of nations and cities, as is evident in Nineveh, and by that of the prophet Jeremiah: "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it: If that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them."

4. *The first death.*

§ 12. For this reason has God concealed the time of our death from us, that thereby we may be kept in a daily and uninterrupted practice of repentance, as not knowing but every day may be our last. The whole life of man is given him for repentance, says St. Bernard. And this repentance is nothing else but a daily cross and

* O tristissimum spectaculum, & miserandum pœnitentiæ speculum.

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tribulation; as is represented by the Psalmist, saying, "I am ready to halt, and my sorrow is continually before me." God, who has promised grace to the penitent, has not promised to sinners another day to repent in. "It is appointed unto men once to die; but after this the judgment." *Think upon thy latter end*, says the son of Sirach, *and thou shalt never be guilty of wilful sin:* For such as God shall find you to be, as such will he judge you. Wherefore so live, as you would wish to have done when you come to die. Revolve seriously in your mind, where they now are, who but a few years before, wasted their life with lust and vanity, and being unwilling to be reasoned out of the pursuit of worldly pleasure, freely enjoyed, the good things that are present, as the lot and portion of their happiness? Certainly, they are now all gone to their own place, where they wait for the publication of their last sentence: Wherefore "Come out of Babylon, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

5. *The last judgment.*

§ 13. After death there is neither place nor time for repentance. It is here in this world, where life forever is either lost or gained. Those that repent betimes shall not be condemned in judgment: But those that will not be argued out of the confident dream of their good state, shall at last be thunderstruck with that dreadful sentence, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire:" "Behold therefore, now is the accepted time: Behold, now is the day of Salvation!" Which will be followed by the day of judgment in the other world. "To day therefore, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart, as in the provocation, lest I swear in my wrath, that you shall not enter into my rest. We must all appear, says St. Paul, before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, whether it be good or bad." Those now who seriously repent, "their sins shall be covered, and they shall no more be mentioned unto him," as the prophet Ezekiel declares. Lay hold, therefore, on the tender of mercy betimes, and confess your sins, O man, that they may be blotted out.

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6. *The second death.*

14. With this life, the time of the gracious visitation of God expires. It will then be heard: "Son, remember that thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things." Now life is past, and gone, and expired, and you are now dead, indeed, viz. dead unto God forever, to whom you refused to live in time. A sad and unhappy change for a man, whereby for a handful of transitory vanity, the light of God's countenance is lost forever! For how should the dead enjoy the goodness of God which they disdained whilst they were alive? And how should they there taste of God's love, to which they have been so great strangers here? Remember therefore, that here only is time for mercy, and the hour of visitation for repentance; whereas there the damned shall so die, as notwithstanding always to live; and they shall so live, as yet to die eternally. All the senses shall there suffer the pains of most exquisite torment. The sight shall be punished with most horrible darkness: The ears with howling and gnashing of teeth: The smelling with stench of fire and brimstone: The taste with the bitterness of gall, and of a constant death; and finally, the touch with the sense of tortures without end, or any the least prospect of redress.

7. *Everlasting happiness.*

§ 15. Is it not a madness to prefer a perishing pleasure before eternal joy, and the glorious presence of God? Now none shall enter into this, but he who has washed himself in the salutary tears of a penitent faith, and "made white his robes in the blood of the Lamb: For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murtherers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." None of those, who, here being invited to the feast of Christ, and refused to come, "shall taste of his supper." The highest joy, and consequently the whole reward of eternal life, will be the beatific vision of God. "Again, (says Christ) you shall see me, and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man taketh from you." And this sight of the face of God, is the joy of the angels themselves, their life, their bread, and their food invisible, by which they are sustained.

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Hence Raphael the angel speaking to Tobit; *I eat*, says he, *invisible meat and drink, that cannot be seen by men.* But as this vision of the glorious countenance of God gives the most transcendent satisfaction; so to be banished from it, is to suffer the greatest, the most intolerable, and the most exquisite torment.

CHAP. IX.

What Repentance is; how to be performed, and how the Divine Goodness invites us thereto.

JOEL ii. 12, 13.—*Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning. And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: For he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.*

§ 1. THE Lord, whose mercy is infinite, will by no means seek our destruction, but our life and salvation. He only best knows the wretched and deplorable condition we are fallen into by sin; and is at the same time greatly desirous to secure the interest of our soul, by reclaiming us from so dangerous a state. It is for this reason, he so earnestly invites and allures the soul to a sincere and unfeigned repentance; this being the only and never-failing means of our help and safety.

§ 2. Sometimes he is pleased to stir us up by most dreadful threatenings: "Behold, (says he) by the prophet Jeremiah, I will bring evil upon this people; because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it." Again: "And now because ye have done all these works, saith the Lord, and I spoke unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not. Therefore will I cast you out of my sight." Which dreadful commination, and denunciation of both temporal and eternal evils, should strike fear and terror into us. For the threatening of God is not an empty voice, or a sound that vanishes away into nothing, but is accompanied with most powerful effects, and a consuming

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wrath, in which due time will be made manifest, and which at this time we already feel to our too, too sad experience; wherein miseries and calamities, like a flood, seem to carry all before them. And these will undoubtedly multiply upon us, and exert themselves with the utmost fierceness at last, if not prevented by a timely and sincere repentance. Thus the wrath of God shall be poured forth in wars, famines, pestilence, fire, and inundations, till he has undone and destroyed at length our very foundations, as he once did to the city of Jerusalem.

§ 3. But if the denunciation of the wrath and judgment of God cannot prevail upon us, yet his most bountiful grace, attended with a train of so many endearing circumstances and marks of love, ought to melt down our hearts, and to mollify them into true repentance and reciprocal returns of love. For thus speaks the Lord by the prophet Jeremiah: "Return thou backsliding Israel, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: For I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger forever. Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God." In which words God makes a most ready offer of his grace, entreats and adjures us to return to himself, being willing to accept repentance for sins; according to that of the wiseman: *But thou, mastering thy power, judgest with equity, and orderest us with great favour, and hast made thy children to be of good hope, that thou givest repentance for sins.*

§ 4. Which passage, as it is exactly parallel to the former; so it plainly evinces, that God, by his grace, mercy, patience, bounty, and clemency, invites us to repentance. But chiefly three things contained in these places deserve our particular observation: 1. The *nature* of repentance, or what it is to repent; namely, to *turn unto the Lord.* 2. The *manner*, how repentance is to be worked out, viz. By *fasting*, *weeping*, and *mourning.* 3. The *motive* to repentance, which is the paternal goodness of God: *For I am merciful.* As to the first, we are to know, that to repent, is nothing else, but from the law of

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God to acknowledge the natural blindness, original corruption, and detestable impurity fostering within us; and to account this as the very source and fountain of all sin, whereby we depart from God, the supreme and eternal good, and deserve, besides various temporal punishments, inflicted on obstinate sinners, his everlasting wrath in the inextinguishable flames of hell.

§ 5. These things seriously called to mind, will prove as many monitors, to lament, and from the bottom of our heart, to bewail the deplorable crookedness of our nature; and this not from any fear of the deserved punishment, but from an inward sense of the heinousness of the many provocations offered to so merciful a Father. This being done, we may then raise again, through the gospel, our drooping soul, and with a well-grounded faith, rely on the favour of God, and sure remission of sins promised in Christ Jesus; which will needs be attended with a serious amendment of life, a constant purification of our hearts by faith, a mortification of our evil desires, a conquering our rebellious and disobedient spirit, a renouncing our own will, opposite to that of God, and in a word, with a new life acceptable unto God, which in Christ, will bring forth fruit worthy of repentance; suitably to what God enjoins by the prophet: "Wash ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well: Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow."

§ 6. But here, here is the difficulty! For these things are much easier to be said, than reduced into practice, which proceeds from hence; that hardly any body will go about so weighty a work in good earnest, and search into the very original cause of the many disorders obvious in his life and conduct. Almost every one flatters himself into a confident opinion of his goodness and piety, and cherishes the affections of his old man, under some empty shew of godliness. Alas! how few is there now, that care to see their heart in its native ugliness and depravity, and to be made sensible of that vein of ill-nature which runs through all, and even their best and most shining actions. People are now a-days

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too well pleased with themselves, and do not like to be over-nice and scrupulous in religion. They are not at all suspicious of any false step they might be like to take in so important a matter, nor will they have the inward sore of corruption touched too closely. And this is the reason that Christ himself, together with the grace of God, lodged in and manifested by him, is so little regarded in these our unhappy days.

§ 7. But the prophet is certainly of another mind, when he charges us, to "turn unto God with all our heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;" thereby intimating, that we are turned away from God, having "forsaken the fountain of living waters;" and now no ways able to attain unto life and happiness again, unless we return unto him from whom we are fallen away. It is for this purpose the prophet Jeremiah charges "backsliding children to return," with the promise annexed, that the "Lord will heal their backslidings." For this verily is the will of God, that we on one hand freely acknowledge our misery, that he on the other, may have compassion on us.

§ 8. But seeing by nature, we are so far blinded, as to be utterly unable of ourselves, sufficiently to discover our own fall and wretchedness; therefore God has been pleased to afford means for bringing us to a sound knowledge of ourselves, viz. his word and sacrament, which being duly used, will be accompanied always by his own grace and Spirit. By these the Father draws, allures, and calls us to himself as so many lost wandering sheep. For as a straying sheep cannot of itself return, but must of necessity be sought out and brought back into the fold by the shepherd: So should we forever go astray in the wilderness of sin and delusion, did not God himself seek us out, and graciously gather us to himself. And this the examples of Peter and Paul most evidently confirm. "Turn thou me, (saith the prophet,) and I shall be turned: For thou art the Lord my God. Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: For thou art my praise." "For it is God, (says the apostle) which worketh in us, both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

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§ 9. Wherefore, as soon as the Lord awakens us by the use of the foresaid means, and invites us to repentance, it is then our part, not to withstand any longer his grace and Spirit; (as it is said, "To day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts:") but to acknowledge the sin which he now begins to reprove in us, and by no means make light of the grace offered us in the gospel; and then God will assuredly have mercy upon us, as he himself declares: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

§ 10. And upon this account the work of conversion, though it be entirely a free gift of God, is yet in one respect ascribed to us, viz. inasmuch as we do but give up ourselves to the Lord and his operations, not resisting wilfully his Spirit, or, as the apostle expresses it, not putting his word from us, nor stopping our ears against it, as the Jews of old did. On the contrary, whenever the severity of the law has laid open our spiritual diseases, and we have felt the smart and bitterness thereof; let us then step over into the dispensation of the gospel, to have our distemper cured, and such lenitives applied, as our heavenly Physician shall think fit for our recovery.

§ 11. An image of this we have in a straying sheep. This, if it but hears the voice of the shepherd from afar, starts back immediately, and returns to the flock. And how willing should the lost sinner be, to follow his shepherd's voice crying after him, if sin had not besotted him so far, as to out-do the very beasts in stupidity? Of this indeed the prophet complains: "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. Shall they fall and not arise? Shall he turn away, and not return? The stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times, and the turtle, and the crane, and the swallow observe the times of their coming: but my people know not the judgment of the Lord."

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§ 12. We ought therefore most fervently to implore the Lord, not to withdraw from us his gracious assistance, without which we must certainly go astray. For since the old Adamical and corrupt nature is so deeply woven, as it were, into our flesh and blood; then undoubtedly we have need also of daily, yea, hourly supplies of grace, for repressing the tyranny of sin, and for nourishing up the life of God within us. For this is the life of our soul, as this is the life of our body. And as the life of the body, bereft of the free enjoyment of the air, must needs be extinguished; so the vital flame of the inward life will speedily languish, without a daily support of the grace of God itself. For this reason prayed Solomon: "The Lord our God be with us, let him not leave us nor forsake us; that he may incline our hearts unto him, to walk in all his ways."

§ 13. This is a lesson which is not to be learnt in a superficial manner, but by a close and practical application brought home to every one in particular. Let every one look into himself and reform one man, and then we shall all be reformed in time. Let us remember that comfortable exhortation and the promise annexed thereunto: "Seek the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart, saith the Lord."

§ 14. But to true repentance, it is not enough to refrain only from gross sins, and foul visible pollutions; but the very heart, from whence all those evils proceed, is to be changed and purified, that the inward pride, covetousness, luxury, with the whole train of sinful affections, be mortified at last. For whilst the heart is unchanged, unreformed, unrenewed; that is, whilst our own natural bent and bias, our inward malice, wrath, hatred, enmity, revenge, lying and deceit, are lodged within us, all our boasts of, and pretences to, and formalities in religion, are but mere shew and pageantry. For God requires no less at our hands than a new heart, and a new creature in Christ Jesus. And not one is so holy, so good, and so thoroughly cleansed, but he

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will still find something in his own heart to be thrown out, to be amended, to be set to rights. "As a fountain casteth out her waters, so Jerusalem casts out her wickedness." And so much of the first head, relating to the *nature* of repentance, &c.

§ 15. Let us now consider in the second place, the *manner* of our returning to God: "With all the heart, (says the prophet) with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning." Wretched mortals can weep floods of tears for empty and perishing goods, whilst they remain unmoved at the miserable state of their souls, and the loss of eternal and unfading goods! being therein altogether unlike to penitent David, who, by his example, sets a most shining pattern of a sincere and unfeigned repentance before us. "For the Lord looketh on the heart; and trieth the hearts and reins."

§ 16. What the prophet says of fasting, is principally to be understood of a general fast enjoined by God to all the people: In which fast the whole body of a nation, as one man, acts repentance, publicly confesses its sins, deplores and bewails them, humbles itself before God, fasts both inwardly and outwardly; and being both as to body and soul thus prepared, earnestly begs remission of sins, deprecating at the same time the judgments of God, gathering every where over the earth, filled with sin and violence. Such a general fast and public repentance as this; such a sincere mourning, prayer, faith, confession, and supplication, is the most effectual means to appease the wrath of a provoked God, and to avert his judgments from a kingdom or nation. This appears clearly from the history of the defeat of the other tribes of Israel, by that of Benjamin; whereby the former having in two battles lost forty thousand men, they all went up and came before the Lord, with weeping and mourning, and there fasted the whole day, from the morning until evening. A like illustrious example is recorded of the Ninevites, and of the children of Israel beaten by the Philistines, when the former kept a fast for seven days, after Saul and Jonathan were both slain in the battle.

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§ 17. Such solemn, penitential fasts were also in use in the primitive church, the whole multitude of christians meeting together, and upon the approach of any public calamity, most solemnly humbling themselves before God. Not surely, to obtain remissions of sins by such specious performances, as so many meritorious acts of devotion; but by a contrite, sober, and humble heart to appease the Lord, and to deprecate the judgments ready to break in upon a nation. And such fasts ought to have been preserved in the church, even to this day, and kept up according to their original constitution.

§ 18. Such fasts as these, accompanied with true repentance, would prove an impregnable wall and fortification against all our enemies; a sovereign medicine in all pestilential and epidemical diseases, and a safeguard about all our estates and possessions. An example of this, we have in holy Job, who, whenever his children had spent any day in mirth and jollity, offered unto God, prayers, sacrifices, and fastings for them; and thus as it were, strongly fortified his house against the insults of malignant spirits. It is certain, that the Lord in such public calamities, looks out for such men as may oppose, like a bulwark, the torrent of his wrath ready to make a breach. "I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none. Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them, I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath: their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord God." Mark this well, and remember also the intercession of Abraham.

§ 19. Such a defence was the prophet Daniel, when he made confession to God of the sins of all the people. Likewise does the prophet Joel, in a most lively manner, describe such a penitential fast: "Blow the trumpet in Sion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly. Gather the people: sanctify the congregation: assemble the elders: gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests,

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the ministers of the Lord, say, spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach." And such public fasts, both ordinary and extraordinary, ought to be celebrated by the whole multitude with ardent zeal and devotion, and not with a formal appearance of godliness only. For it is the will of God, that every one readily confess his sins. He requires true humility, sincere repentance, and turning unto him with our whole heart. Hence the prophet commands the heart, and not the garments, to be rent, according to the custom of the Jews, who, at the hearing of any sad or uncommon tidings, would presently rend their clothes, to evidence thereby the inward sorrow they were affected with. But this degenerating in time, like other rights, into mere formality, some being more intent upon bodily fasting, and the outward tearing of the garments, than the substance of religion itself hereby represented, the prophet reproves them here, saying, "Is it such a fast that I have chosen? A day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord? Is not this the fast that I have chosen? To loose the bands of wickedness; to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke: Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seekest the naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?"

§ 20. Which divine oracle explains to us the nature of a true fast; which is best kept, when on one hand we abstain from all sins, when we subdue the wanton lust of the flesh, and keep the old man, with all his members, under constant restraint and depression: and on the other, when we are fervent in works of charity, in the practice of patience and mercy, and of other virtues springing up from a contrite, sincere, and penitent heart. And it is with regard to these acts of humiliation, the prophet bids us to rend our hearts. For as the wounds of the heart must needs be ex-

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quisitely painful; so also should grief for our sins affect us to that degree, as if our very heart were bruised and wounded. And this broken spirit, this broken and contrite heart, is that sacrifice which is so highly acceptable to God. Such a heart as this, has by faith obtained a due fitness, to receive the influence of the grace of God, the consolations of the holy Spirit, and the merit and blood of Jesus Christ. For as a raw and massy stone, cannot soak in, or imbibe the oil or water poured upon it, except it be first broke and dashed to pieces; so neither can the sovereign balm of God's grace and consolation, comfort and quicken the heart, except it be first broken and softened into a sense of humility, that by faith it may partake of the merit of Christ. For not "the whole, but the sick, have need of a physician." Nor let any one think he belongs to Christ, unless he has "Crucified the flesh, with its affections and lusts." The blood of Christ will be of no profit to any but those only, who with a contrite, afflicted, penitent, humble, and believing heart, embrace it.

§ 21. As for the *causes* and *motives* to repentance, (which make up the third head) they are thus expressed by the prophet: "Turn unto the Lord, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil." He lays down in these words, a gradual display of the manifold mercies offered to returning sinners; as if he had said: "If you think it a small thing that I am gracious, know that I am merciful also: If this be not enough, I am likewise patient, and slow to anger: If this will not yet suffice, I am, moreover, of great kindness: If, after all, you still require something further; then understand, for your complete satisfaction and encouragement, that I easily repent me of the intended punishment, yea, even when my avenging hand is now lifting up, I am ready to let fall the rod, upon your serious repentance."

§ 22. First then, the prophet calls God gracious; that is, ready to be entreated and reconciled. God is easy to be prevailed with, forgives offences, deals not in strict justice, and the rigour of the law, according to what we

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have deserved. And all these winning and endearing marks of mercy should at length induce us to repentance. There is plenty of admirable promises, all tending to the same end. Such as these: "If you afflict them, they will cry unto me, and I will hear: For I am gracious. Therefore will the Lord wait that he may be gracious unto you. Thou shalt weep no more: He will be very gracious unto thee; at the voice of thy cry, when he shall hear it, he will answer thee." That is, the Most High is so rich in grace, that he waits for you. For in him there is expecting grace, by which he readily receives those that truly turn to him. Preventing grace, expressed by the psalmist: "Let thy tender mercies speedily prevent us." Protecting grace hinted at by the same prophet: "He that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about." Persevering grace: "Surely, (says holy David) mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." Of which we have examples in the preceding chapter. Hereto agrees also that: "With the Lord there is mercy; and with him is plenteous redemption." Which divine clemency should surely be a powerful incitement to sincere repentance.

§ 23. Secondly, the prophet declares that God is merciful: To be merciful, is to be moved easily by the miseries of another, and even from the very bowels to compassionate him. This is to be seen in parents, who not only with a passionate tenderness love their children, but are at the same time so lively touched with their infirmity, misery, and calamity, as to be willing even to die for them, if possible: As appears from David lamenting the death of his son Absalom in this pathetical manner: "O my son Absalom, my son, my son, Absalom: Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son." But these bowels of mercy, this ardent, cordial, and tender affection, are infinitely more conspicuous in God himself, who, out of this affectionate sense, has given up his Son to death, and transcended thereby all the measures of all the affections of all earthly parents whatsoever. This is declared by the prophet: "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they

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may, yet will not I forget thee." And by another: "Is Ephraim my dear Son? Is he a pleasant child? For since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: Therefore my bowels are troubled for him: I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord." And again by another: "The Lord thy God is a merciful God: He will not forget the covenant of thy fathers, which he sware unto them." And the royal prophet confirms it: "The Lord is merciful and gracious." The same calling to mind this mercy, when he had it in his power, of three punishments to choose which he would, answered: "Let us fall now into the hand of the Lord, for his mercies are great." And would to God that these bowels of so paternal a goodness, might also allure us to an unfeigned repentance! St. Paul himself recommending this as the most powerful inducement, when he "beseeches us by the mercies of God," &c.

§ 24. The third appellation given to God by the prophet, is, that he is patient, or slow to anger. He is not easily moved to wrath: He suffers many provocations offered him, and gives time for repentance and conversion. All which he has abundantly made out by many real demonstrations, strong enough to convince us, that even in God himself "Charity beareth all things, endureth all things," as parents use to bear with their tender children, till they come to a fuller ripeness of years. To this purpose says St. Peter: "The Lord is long-suffering to us ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." And again: "Account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation." And Paul wishes "the goodness of God may lead us to repentance." To this long-suffering of God only, it is to be ascribed, that he granted the old world an hundred and twenty years to repent in; all this time bearing with their enormous provocations, and waiting for repentance. And oh! how much time has he given us, to repent and work out our salvation! Which divine grace is abused by those who grow the more wanton for mercies, "Turning even the grace of God itself into lasciviousness." But hereby they do but hasten their just ruin, and render the more grievous

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the deserved punishment. Were but one of these many and provoking offences which men are wont to commit against God, daily offered to an impotent mortal, nothing could be expected, but the severity of his resentment. How inconceivably great then must be the patience of God, who not only pardons offences so numerous and so heinous, as the greatest against man comes unspeakably short of, but returns also all manner of kindness unto the offender himself! And oh! that this immense patience of the Lord might inspire us with a hatred of sin, and guard us from ever attempting the like again!

§ 25. Fourthly, God is represented to be of great kindness; and so great indeed, that no sin, how great soever, can surpass it. For as God is essentially and wholly good, so is he desirous to communicate himself wholly to men, provided they be but willing to receive and to admit him. Yea, by his nature he can do nothing but good, taking therein the greatest pleasure, and "rejoicing over us to do us good." His mercy is great as himself, that is, infinite. It extends to all mankind. The mercy of man is towards his neighbour; but the mercy of the Lord is upon all flesh. The same we find most copiously described in the Psalms: "Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens. As the heaven is high above the earth: So great is his mercy toward them that fear him." And in the Lamentations: "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not: They are new every morning: Great is thy faithfulness." See therefore, O man! that so inexpressible a goodness may influence you to repentance.

§ 26. And, lastly, the prophet commends the Lord for that he "repenteth him of the evil." Which is as if he would say; "It is the nature of God, to punish with reluctancy; and when he is even constrained thereto, it is not for our destruction, but salvation, that we may not be condemned with the world." He then does *his strange work*, (of punishment) *that he may bring to pass his own work*, (of mercy.) Thus he repented of the evil he had designed against Nineveh. And therefore it is

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"good, that a man should both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. For the Lord will not cast off forever. But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men."

§ 27. Do this therefore, O men: work out your repentance. And then believe, that as soon as you repent of sin, and supplicate the Lord in true faith, God will also repent of the punishment inflicted. How memorable are the words of the Lord to Jonah: "Dost thou well to be angry for the gourd? Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow, which came up in a night, and perished in a night; And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons?" This boundless mercy is still the same even at this day, and will continue so forever to penitent and returning sinners. Go therefore, O man, and answer this overflowing mercy of God with suitable returns of love and repentance!

CHAP. X.

Of Four Properties of true Repentance.

PSALM cii. 9, &c.—*I have eaten ashes like bread; and mingled my drink with weeping. Because of thine indignation and thy wrath: For thou hast lifted me up, and cast be down. My days are like a shadow, that declineth; and I am withered like grass. But thou, O Lord, shalt endure forever: And thy remembrance unto all generations.*

§ 1. IN these words are enumerated four practical properties of true repentance enjoined to a sinner that repents. The first is, *to account himself unworthy of all the mercies of God.* It is contained in these words: "I have eaten ashes like bread: and mingled my drink with weeping;" that is, there is nothing I can take any more delight in, accounting myself unworthy of any costly fare; which, however pleasing it may be

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to the palate of others, is now no more savoury to me than the very ashes. The same regard to our own unworthiness is thus inculcated by the Lord: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." And, "If any man come to me, and hate not his own life, he cannot be my disciple." Expressing therein a threefold respect, a true christian ought to have to his own unworthiness.

§ 2. First then, he commands him to *deny himself:* that is, to die to self-will, to self-love, self-honour; thinking himself utterly unworthy of any of the benefits conferred by God on other men; or judging himself not "worthy of the least of all the mercies of God." And in fine, reputing himself the most inconsiderable, not only of all men, but even of all other creatures too; after the example of Christ, who said: "I am a worm, and no man." In this manner, I say, for a man to despise himself, is truly to deny himself.

§ 3. He commands him, secondly, to *hate himself,* that is, to condemn in himself whatever is pleasing and acceptable to the flesh; as honour, luxury, revenge, anger, avarice, and whatever else savours of the tenderness and delicacy of the flesh; to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts, and to abhor in himself, its whole offspring as the work of the devil, tending only to increase and to nourish up the perverse seed of original depravity within us. And such self-abhorrency of a sinner, will then needs be followed by pleading guilty, and looking upon himself as the vilest cast-away and reprobate that ever was.

§ 4. The third lesson, enjoined in these words, consists in *taking up the cross, and in following the Lord.* That is, that we not with a discontented, but with a cheerful mind, and unshaken constancy, bear all manner of afflictions, and deem ourselves worthy, not only of these, but even of much more grievous sufferings. Thus Christ himself, whose example is set before us, "endured the cross and despised the shame," thereby teaching us, that in quietness and confidence shall be our strength also. And all this is comprehended in the imitation, or following after Christ. Upon the whole, these things

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may make it appear, that a soul truly humble and penitent, thinks herself unworthy of all God's benefits, and even of the daily food and refreshment by which she is sustained. And this after the example of Christ himself, who, parched with thirst upon the cross, and having vinegar mixed with gall presented to him, only said, "It is finished." This was the reason also, that those, who under the Old Testament seriously entered upon the work of reformation, did judge themselves entirely unworthy of any good, and putting sackcloth on their skin, sat in the dust, and satisfied their hunger only with bread spread with ashes, and their thirst with water mingled with tears; for a testimony, they did not deserve any cleaner and more dainty food, but merited rather to eat and to drink, together with their food, the tears plentifully trickling down upon it.

§ 5. Now the cause of so great self-abasement, was that profound sense wherewith they were affected, not only on account of their sin, but also of that just and dreadful condemnation which unavoidably attends that dissolute course of life, whereby a sinner wilfully neglects the offers of mercy both to soul and body. This consideration lays the returning sinner very low, and he thinks now himself utterly unworthy even of the least of God's benefits; an elegant type whereof we have in Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son. For when David was raised to the royal dignity, he called to mind the kindness of his dear friend Jonathan, who formerly had delivered him out of the hand of his father Saul; and commanding search to be made, whether there remained any of Jonathan's family, to whom he might make a suitable return of thanks; he found Mephibosheth at last, a lame and miserable man, who being ordered by David to eat bread at the king's table, bowed himself, and burst forth into these words: "What is thy servant, that thou shouldst look upon such a dead dog as I am!" An illustrious pattern indeed of a soul truly contrite in spirit, and penitent in heart, and therefore sensible of both her own unworthiness, and of all the mercies bestowed on her by the Lord. And certainly, we may, with far greater reason, make use of the same humble

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speech, whenever God vouchsafes us, as it were, the food of his own table, or in the blessed communion, feasts us with his own flesh and blood.

§ 6. In like manner does the prodigal son, after his happy return, express his sorrowful mind to the father: "Father, (says he) I am now no more worthy to be called thy son, make me as one of thy hired servants." And the woman of Canaan was even content to be called a dog, if she was but permitted to enjoy the portion of a dog, and to eat of the crumbs falling from the master's table. And the apostle Peter: "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord;" that is, unworthy with whom thou shouldst have any converse. And the centurion of Capernaum was of the same mind: "Lord, (says he,) I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof." So also St. Paul professes himself not meet to be called an apostle: And declares that "he counted not his life dear unto him, so that he might finish his course with joy." And this inward sense of self-abasement, expresses David, by "eating ashes with bread, and mingling the drink with weeping." And if the heart of a christian be brought to this sense of its own vileness, then it is truly contrite and humble, and fit to be made a living sacrifice to God.

§ 7. A second property of true repentance, is, *to grieve at nothing so much as at the offences offered to God himself.* This is intimated in these words: "Because of thine indignation and thy wrath; for thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down:" That is, of all my other miseries and griefs, the greatest and most insupportable, is the sense I have of my having most heinously offended the infinitely good, holy, and righteous God. And truly, since God is nothing but charity itself, grace, righteousness, goodness, and mercy, yea, the original source and only fountain of all virtue, it is certain, that God must needs be offended with every sin committed by men; since the nature of sin is directly opposite to the nature of God. Thus by unrighteousness, the righteousness of God is offended, he being righteousness itself. By lying, the truth of God is offended, he being truth itself. By hatred, the love of God is offended, he being charity

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itself. In a word: Since God is the sublimest perfection of all virtue, goodness, and love, it can be no less than a piece of diabolical malice to offend such infinite goodness, such immense love, nay, love itself. Had he at any time injured us, it would be no great wonder, if actuated by a reciprocal hatred, we did offend him again in our turn: But now, when he gives us nothing but what is good; soul, body, and life itself; when he feeds and clothes us, when he cures our body when sick; yea, pardons our sins when we pour out our souls to him; ready to receive us into favour, as often as we return; when he has given us his only Son with the Holy Spirit, yea, himself, and adopted us for his sons: And now having done all this for men, and yet to be offended, to be opposed, to be hated by men, is an impudence, a madness, and a malice, altogether unaccountable and monstrous.

§ 8. Would it not be highly horrid and impious to kill him who gave you life? to beat and wound him who kindly embraced and cherished you in his bosom? to insult and affront him who heaped honours and dignities upon you? And finally to disown and reject him who had chosen you for his son? Behold all these, and far greater injuries and indignities, you offer to your heavenly Father, to the supreme, the righteous, the holy God, whom angels tremblingly adore, and whom seraphims worship with the acclamations of "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth also is full of his glory!" though you who are dust and ashes are not afraid to offend him. This monstrous, this prodigious injury, if a penitent man earnestly calls to mind, it is impossible but he must be affected with the greatest grief and sorrow of heart, and feel the smart of his wounded conscience to equal and even exceed that of a wounded body. And all the reason in the world it should be so; for hence must needs arise a dread and terror inwardly threatening the conscience with wrath and judgment, and outwardly setting before us the approach of temporal and dismal calamities. Whence a man, like Job, finds no rest, takes no delight in any thing, loathing even his

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meat and drink. Those terrible pangs of conscience are hinted at by David: "Thine arrows, (says he,) stick fast in me: And thy hand presseth me sore." For as a wound grievously smarts, and still waxes worse whilst the arrow remains fixed within it; thus is the conscience altogether deprived of ease and calmness, while the sting of sin and judgment is untaken away. And these lashes and clamours hurrying about a penitent soul, proceed from nothing else but the sentence of divine justice proclaimed in the conscience, and the terrors of hell and death attending it. Therefore did David exclaim: "Thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down." Being like to one thrown down from a lofty rock into a low valley, whose bones and limbs must needs be grievously broken and maimed.

§ 9. But how terrible soever the fear of the judgments of God may prove to an awakened conscience, yet there is some ground of comfort left too; since the prophet tells us, that these arrows, these threats, these terrors, are the arrows and terrors of God himself: and it is God, who, by these, having wounded and broken the heart, does now heal and restore it again: it is he that kills, and it is he that makes alive; he bows down, and he raises again. He brings down to the gates of hell, and he brings up again. Whoever therefore accounts and feels nothing more bitter and grievous, than to have offended God, the infinite good and love itself; he, and he only, has experimentally learnt the doctrine of contrition, and laid a firm foundation for solid and substantial piety. This was one of David's acts of repentance: "Against thee, (says he,) thee only, have I sinned." As if he should say: this is my only trouble, this my anguish and sorrow, that I have offended thee. And of Daniel thus expressing himself; "Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us, confusion of face," because we have offended so righteous a God.

§ 10. The third property of repentance is contained in these words: "My days are like a shadow that declineth: and I am withered like grass." That is, a heart truly penitent, is deeply sensible of its own weakness. It entirely despairs of its own strength

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and ability, knowing itself to be as destitute of life and power, as the very shadow; and as empty of spirit and moisture, as the grass that fades away. The same is affirmed in another psalm: "Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth, and mine age is as nothing before thee; verily, every man in his best state, is altogether vanity." O how noble a step would it be towards the attainment of true and substantial wisdom, were man but sensible of his own nothingness! Man is as great a nothing as a shadow itself. As a shadow is without substance, without life, and without motion of itself, and vanishes at the departure of the sun: so is the condition of man, whenever the Lord withdraws the light of life from him! And it is worthy of observation, that the nigher the sun is, the less are the shadows observed to be: and on the contrary, the farther the sun removes from us, the larger do the shadows appear. The same happens to man: the more of God and of his gifts is present with a pious man, the less he esteems himself, the less he boasts of himself, and of what he calls his. As on the contrary: the farther a man is removed from God, the more he swells with a high conceit of himself, the more he is puffed up with his parts and abilities, the more he extends the bounds of pride and haughtiness, and the less he knows how to keep within compass.

§ 11. Again: as shadows at the setting of the sun are greatest, yet even then just ready to vanish and to disappear; their greatness being but a fore-runner of their approaching end: so is it with the shadows of this world, and the whole train of vain pomps and pleasures, which commonly post away on a sudden, when we are most confident of, and most lifted up by them; it being generally a certain sign of imminent destruction and ruin, when a person comes to be noted for relying too much upon the shadowy appearances of perishing grandeur. For as the shadows vanish upon the withdrawing of the sun; so when empty man becomes great in his own eyes, the divine Sun sets upon him unawares, and he returns to his nothing, even when he thought to be something. Moreover: as the shadow

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has no life of itself, but entirely moves with the motion of the sun upon which it depends: so man of his own nature, is nothing but a corps destitute of life and motion; and it is God alone who is able to put life and motion in it. For as the shadow of a tall and goodly tree moves not, but as the tree itself is moved, or as the light of the sun reflects itself from the tree; so man only lives and moves in God, of whom he is as a shadow, and reflected image. And the hour of death will at length fully declare that a man's days on the earth are as a shadow, as a vain shew or image; nay, as grass which grows up, but soon withers when it is mown down: so does our life fade away immediately, when it is cut down by the fatal scythe of death. Lo! thus are our days consumed into smoke, and we are gone like the shadow when it declineth.

§ 12. Of all which, if a man by true humility be thoroughly persuaded, and in himself convinced, that he is nothing in the sight of God but a lifeless shadow; then, verily, is his repentance unfeigned, and his heart right before the Lord. And as it is appointed unto all men once to undergo a natural death, so ought all daily to die unto sin, that they may live unto God, and happily depart out of this mortal life, when all the shadows must disappear at last: Which daily dying to the world, as it is undoubtedly the best exercise, so it is also the best preparation for the hour of death: and if we earnestly practise the former, we shall then be fitted for undergoing the latter. For what we most frequently practise, in that we are most perfect.

§ 13. The fourth property of true repentance, as it works by faith, is our *union with God*, implied in these words, "But thou, O Lord, shalt endure forever; and thy remembrance unto all generations." As if the prophet had said: "Though I am persuaded, that I am like a perishing shadow, and wither like the grass here, yet am I no less certain, that in thee I shall abide forever, as thou thyself art an eternal and never-fading good." As by sin a man is divorced from God; so by true conversion, he is again united to him. As the person of Christ is indivisible, notwithstanding his two natures;

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and as the eternal Deity united the human nature in Christ Jesus with itself in so firm a bond, as is not to be dissolved by death itself; the humanity of Christ remaining in perpetual union with the divinity, and being filled with the glory residing therein: So in the work of true conversion unto God, penitent and believing souls are so closely and intimately united to God, that neither life nor death can separate them from him: for he that is joined to the Lord, is one spirit, God betrothing us unto himself forever.

§ 14. In a word: Christ himself is of this a most sufficient witness to us, and in us; and he is that book of life wherein we are plainly taught, that, as his human nature abides eternally united with the divine; so all those that continue faithful to him, shall be eternally also united with their Lord and head, being one spirit with him. For as God is eternal, and Christ is eternal; so the promises of God in Christ are also eternal and inviolable, having made with us a covenant of everlasting grace. So that, how much soever we may be forsaken of the world, how much soever vexed and tormented by sin, death, hell, and the devil; nay, if even our flesh and our heart should fail at last, and be wholly consumed, yet is God the rock, or strength of our heart, and our portion forever.

CHAP. XI.

That the New Creature is the Effect of true Conversion. How a Christian is by Faith made a Lord over all, and by Charity a Servant under all; the Life of Christ being for this his Pattern and Mirror.

2 COR. v. 17.—*If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.*

§ 1. ALL that are in Christ by faith, *are new creatures*; that is, are the children of God, are righteous before God, have forgiveness of sin, have the Holy Ghost, are partakers of the divine nature, are heirs of the everlasting life, are set free in their consciences from the law, curse,

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death, devil, hell, and damnation, and are bound to no time, place, or legal ordinance. Because whatever appertains to their salvation, is in them begotten of Christ by grace, or by his spirit entering them; and is conceived and propagated in them through the operation of faith which impregnates them with the very nature of Christ: Whence neither time nor place, neither law nor commandment, nor ceremonies, nor any thing whatsoever, can be any hinderance to them. For they are made perfect in Christ, (who is now become a vital principle in them) having in him the accomplishment of the law through faith.

§ 2. Whence the name of a christian is a higher and more excellent name than all the names in the world. It is a greater name than is to be found in palaces and courts; a name above all offices and posts of greatness; a name above all time, all place, all law, and above the whole world, with all that is therein contained. But then again, a true christian is lower and more abased in himself, than all things that have a name: and from his life it appears, how the name of a christian is also the most abject name of all the names in the world, and the undermost of them all, without exception. Thus as high as faith exalts a christian above all; so low charity brings down a christian under all. This you will be best able to understand, when you seriously consider the holy life of Christ; which is the brightest mirror both of charity, and of all other virtues, in the most consummate degree.

§ 3. Behold, how did Christ make himself the servant of us all! How humble was he in heart! how meek in spirit! how kind and friendly in words! How graceful, how obliging in his behaviour! how merciful towards the poor! how compassionate towards the distressed! How patient towards his slanderers! How easy in his answers! How gracious towards sinners! Whom did he ever despise? whom did he ever revile, being reviled! how condescending was he to the very meanest! how ready to show acts of grace to all, without distinction How heartily did he seek the salvation of all men, praying for his very enemies and crucifiers! how did he bear our sicknesses,

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sorrows, reproaches, stripes, wounds and punishments! And indeed, what else is the life of Christ, but a most accomplished pattern of love, of humility, of patience, and of all other virtues whatsoever? This we ought to look into, and to reflect upon in our hearts; but especially in solitude and retiredness from human affairs. This certainly is better than all the high boasts of knowledge, and of all the wit and wisdom of this world. This life of Christ is like a seal to be stamped upon our hearts, to leave therein the impression of his image, of his life, of his love, of his humility, of his patience, of his cross, of his reproach, of his death. This would prove a true celestial light of our hearts, and a powerful means both to renew us in the inner man, and to transform us more and more into the divine image. Upon the whole, we see that, as Christ was put under all men, yea, under all creatures, with regard to his humiliation in this world; but is now with regard to his exaltation, a Lord over all: So a christian is, with regard to his faith, a lord over all, nothing excepted but God only; but with regard to his life and conduct, a servant of servants, being even under all persons and things.

CHAP. XII.

That Christ is the Way to true Godliness, and the Mark of a Christian's Life: And that he who is not led of God, is sure to go astray.

PSALM lxxxvi. 11.—*Teach me, O Lord, thy way: that I may walk in thy truth. O knit my heart unto thee: That I may fear thy name.*

§ 1. THIS way is Christ. *I am*, saith he, *the way*. But you will here ask, How am I to come unto him? Why, it is by *faith*. And how is my heart to be knit and united unto him? It is by faith doubtless. For *faith* unites us with Christ; *love* binds us fast, and *hope* upholds and sustains us while we walk in this way, that is, in the life of Christ. And yet at the same time, both

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faith, hope, and charity proceed from Christ himself, and are his work in us. All these graces flow from him, and return to him. This way goes out from him and leads back to him again.

§ 2. Faith apprehends the person of Christ, and his office; charity follows Christ in his life and conversation; hope reaches out to the glory that is to be revealed in Christ. Faith will have no other Christ, no other Redeemer, no other Saviour, no other Mediator and way for the conduct of life, but Jesus Christ only; charity sets before itself the one only life of Christ, as the most perfect and shining pattern to conform itself to: Hope looks up stedfastly to Christ, as the glorious captain of our salvation, keeping its eye fixed upon his everlasting kingdom above. This, this is the right way; this is the unerring truth wherein we are to walk: And this is meant by having the heart united to fear the Lord's name.

§ 3. These three capital virtues are allied again to three other virtues. The alliance of faith, is with *humility;* of charity, with *patience;* and of hope, with *prayer.* For he that believes, humbles himself; he that loves, is disposed to christian forbearance; and he that hopes, learns to pray, and boldly to approach the throne of grace. O how goodly and beautiful is this way! This is the way of God; this is the way of salvation; this is the path to glory, our great Master's way! And may he himself teach us this way of truth, and inspire us with courage to walk therein! Where this frame of mind is, there the soul is chained fast to that one thing which David desired, by the sacred cords of a child-like fear and obedience. Such a one is resolved heartily to follow Christ in humility, in love, and in patience, mortifying the venomous worm of pride lurking within, through the lowliness of the blessed Jesus. Consider how Christ your Lord was made for you a despicable worm, and trampled upon by the basest of men; and by looking unto him, learn to restrain your haughty temper, and your supercilious looks. In a word: Let his humility slay your pride; suppress the assaults of your covetousness, by meditating on the extreme poverty of Christ. Behold, he had not so much as "where to lay his head,"

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and you are griping and greedy, and grasp in possession whatever your unbounded desires light on! Let the spirit of envy die by the consideration of the overflowing love of Christ. He has given you life itself, and you grudge your neighbour even a morsel of bread. Let the flames of revenge be stifled in your breast, by the meekness of Christ. Behold! he prayed for his enemies; and you do not pray for your friends. His face being buffeted with fists, and spit upon by sinners, he quietly endured it; and you can hardly endure a severe look, or an unkind word from your neighbour! Let the enticements to lust and voluptuousness be beaten down in you, by the exquisite pains the Lord suffered in his holy body. Behold and see whether the sorrows of any man were ever like unto his sorrows! And this consideration will prove a check to the wanton lustings of your flesh, and a curb to your hankering after worldly pleasure. He wore a crown of thorns; and would you wear one of gold? He wept for the sins of others; and refuse you to weep for your own? He was a man of sorrows; and should you wish to be a man of pleasure?

O Lord! How few are there among men that are rightly acquainted with this way, which is the only way of true godliness! But shew me, O Lord, thy way, that I may walk in thy truth! Give me a heart that may fear thee, a faith that may close with thee; a love that may follow thee, a hope that may see thy glory, a mind that may fervently love thee, senses that may discern thee, ears that may hear thee, and thy intercessions upon the cross; eyes that may view thee in thy humility and patience; and a mouth that may pray for mine enemies, according to that most blessed pattern thou hast set me. Except thou, O Lord, teachest me this good and safe way, I shall go astray like a lost sheep, and the very light I follow, without thee, will be darkness; and then, O Lord, how great must darkness itself be! O everlasting Light, thou restorest sight to the blind, and givest light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death. Thou didst enlighten Isaac when his bodily eyes were now dim for

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age; and Jacob, when he foretold his sons what should befal them in the last days. Thou didst enlighten Simeon to see thy salvation, and the light of the Gentiles. Open also my eyes, O Lord, that I may contemplate thy admirable life shining with so divine a lustre, and adorned with so marvellous a beauty of heavenly virtues; that thereby I may be changed into thy image from glory to glory! In the first creation, there was darkness upon the face of the deep: And there is darkness also which overspreads the depth of my heart! As it was then said: Let there be light! and there was light: So let the same powerful word produce light out of my darkness, and shine in the dark place of my heart, until the day of salvation dawn, and the bright morning star of a lively knowledge of Christ, arise within me. As in the first creation, the spirit moved upon the face of the waters; modelling and framing that vast creature into order and beauty; so let thy heavenly Spirit move also so effectually upon me, that by his operation no less than Christ himself be formed within me! As in the first creation, the earth was void and without form till it was decked with light, as with a garment, and adorned with variety of creatures by thy word: So is also my degenerate heart become a deformed wilderness, and must remain so forever, except thy hand create it anew, and adorn it with the graces of thy Spirit. As in the first creation, light was divided from darkness, as having no communion with it: So let also in the new creation, the night of sin and corruption fly before the glorious day of thy gospel and grace.

Thy word, O Lord, is light itself; it is in Christ, and is Christ himself. This light is substantial truth, and without it all men are liars, and all their works are works of darkness. Without this light, all the ways of men are ways of error and delusion, and the most shining virtue is nothing but an empty blaze, nay, death and darkness itself. Teach me therefore, O Lord, this way of truth, this way of life, and unite my heart to fear thy name. Let Christ dwell in my heart by faith, and by his Spirit enable me to follow the steps of his love, of his humility, of his meekness set before me, and to look

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unto him as the unerring way to life, and the hope of my approaching glory. Let this fear of the Lord drive away sin, and let it be unto me a root of wisdom, whose branches are life and happiness. For he that abideth in this fear, shall never be forsaken, when all others are set in slippery places, and at last will be cast into destruction.

What will all natural parts and endowments, all arts and sciences, all wit and learning, all riches and greatness, all pleasure and delights avail me without this fear, which is the very crown of wisdom, and exalteth them to honour that hold it fast? All good things come together with the fear of God. It is a treasure that never faileth, a light that never goeth out, a beauty that never fadeth, a pleasure that never grieveth, a dignity that never ceaseth, a labour that never wearieth. There is no bitterness in the fear of God, no grief or anxiety, but mirth and joy, comfort and ease. What is wealth without this fear, what is wit without grace, what is beauty without purity of heart, what is pleasure without a good conscience, what is greatness without God's favour? A man that is without the fear of God, is a vapour that vanisheth, a shadow that disappeareth, a tree that withereth, a branch fit for the fire, and in fine, he is like the chaff the wind tosseth away. In a word: whether a man be rich, noble, or poor, his glory is the fear of God; for none is greater than he that feareth the Lord!

CHAP. XIII.

That Christ is the true Book of Life, teaching us by his Poverty to despise the Pomps of the World.

2 COR. viii. 9.—*Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes, he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.*

§ 1. ALL those that believe in Jesus Christ the Son of God are written in the book of life, or in heaven itself, as the Lord expresses it. This shall be made manifest in that great day, wherein the Lord will "confess their

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names before his Father, and before his angels." But besides, the Lord Jesus himself is a most complete book and unspotted mirror of a truly christian life, he being as the word and wisdom of the Father, made man, and come into the world to teach us by his life and death, and by his conduct and conversation, to set a pattern before us for our imitation.

§ 2. The whole of his life, beginning with his tender infancy, and ending with his death, was made up almost with continual and uninterrupted series of crosses and afflictions; insomuch that he took hardly any step without the inseparable attendance either of a pressing *poverty*, or of a great *contempt*, or of most *exquisite pains* and sufferings that can befal a man: and into these three heads, the entire extent of the life of Christ may be conveniently resolved. The poverty the Lord endured, may be considered again under a three-fold respect: In the first place, he was poor in relation to outward things and to the income of this world, as he himself declared to one who offered to follow him, though with a sinister end he had in his eye: "The foxes, (says he) have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has not where to lay his head." This indigency of worldly goods and riches, was attended by another, which was a poverty and penury of friends and patrons which he might rely upon in time of want and distress. As soon as he entered into the world, he entered into want and poverty. Nothing was more visible in his birth, than poverty and meanness, he choosing to be born at Bethlehem, the least among the cities of Judah, and from a mother too that was destitute of all wealth and worldly greatness. Nor did he ever court the favour and friendship of princes, and of great men in this world, declining it even when it was offered. It is true, there was a cordial friendship betwixt him and Lazarus of Bethany, the evangelist taking particular notice, that the Lord loved him, and thought him worthy of that eminent title of his friend: But then this friendship was not raised at all on any worldly advantages the Lord expected from him; but on that christian faith, that unfeigned candour and probity which was so shining in Lazarus's

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life, and whereby he was induced to believe, that Jesus was really the true Messiah and Saviour of the world.

§ 3. The third degree of the Lord's poverty, was the state of his humiliation, whereby, laying aside the "form of God, he humbled himself, and made himself of no reputation." He thereby entered into the depth of our misery, partaking of all our bodily weaknesses and infirmities. He was wearied with the journies he undertook to finish the work he was sent for; how many tiresome paces did he go, when he went about doing good? but particularly healing multitudes of sick and diseased that continually crowded to him from all parts, and surrounded him often to that degree, that he could not so much as eat bread, and his very friends thought him to be beside himself. He fulfilled also what is said by the prophet, and repeated in the history of the gospel: "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses;" never withdrawing from any hardship, or approaching calamity, never shrinking under the burden of poverty, of cruel mockings, of unjust reproaches, and of other evils and encounters, let them be never so sharp and numerous. And whereas he might have been served by all the creatures of God, and waited on by legions of angels; yet dispensed he with all this glory, and did not exert that Sovereign power which was lodged in him. He suffered his head to be torn by thorns, his hands to be tied, his sacred body to be scourged, hands and feet to be nailed to the cross, his side to be pierced with a spear. All this he cheerfully submitted to, though it had been in his power to prevent it, and with one word to restrain the fury of all the creatures from insulting their Creator in so shameful a manner.

§ 4. In a word: for our sakes, he made himself subject to all the creatures. He took upon him the form of a servant, that by his lowliness, he might repair our losses, and reinstate us into that sovereign dominion over all the creatures, we forfeited in Adam. He rose from the dead again, and gained a perfect conquest at last, thereby to purchase us an everlasting victory. He suffered himself to be tempted by the devil, hurried

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about by his malice, tormented by his instruments, the Jews of old, fastened to the cross by their cruelty: and all this he underwent, in order to rescue mankind from their spiritual thraldom, from the power of the devil leading them captive at his will, and of all his subordinate tools and vassals. Thus the strongest became weak, the Almighty, infirm; the most glorious, was made most despicable; the most beautiful, was most abhorred and hated; the most exalted, most exposed himself to temptations of all kinds, to sufferings and difficulties, to pains and hardships; thereby to check our sinful tenderness and effeminacy, as things utterly misbecoming spiritual soldiers, and to inure his followers betimes to the strait, though despised way of self-denial and mortification. Alas! how tender and delicate are now generally the minds of those that style themselves christians! how unlike are they to the pattern from whence they fetch their denomination, and to the original copy they pretend to write after! The smallest cross is now complained of, as of an insufferable burden, and a little trouble and toil they are perhaps to undergo for their God and neighbour, seem a sufficient plea for them to start back into the smooth way, and to drop entirely the article of the cross, so displeasing to the old man. Not to mention here, how uneasy they are, how restless, how impatient even under those trials and appointments, the Lord sends upon them for promoting the recovery of their own souls, and the glory of his name.

§ 5. Thus has the Lord laid aside the form of God for a while. But this was not all. He did no less lay aside the use of the divine wisdom which resided in him. His conversation with others was plain and easy, and he behaved himself like a man knowing no letters, as the Jews expressed it. He did not assume to himself the wonted air or formalities of a great doctor of divinity, or of an acute reasoner and disputer. Neither did he do like men that value themselves on account of their parts, wit, polite learning, and high descent. Nothing was more obvious in his life and conduct, nothing more visible than a quiet serenity and stillness of mind he en-

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joyed in the midst of all the storms of the world. This was attended however by a divine power, and unaffected holiness of manners, an unfeigned charity, meekness, and humility. In his delivery, he made use of easy and intelligible terms, adapted even to the meanest capacity; and yet did there go along with it a celestial vigour and energy exceedingly affecting the hearts of the hearers. Thus he taught the way of God, in truth, and as one having authority; though at the same time, those that in their manners and discourses endeavoured to please the corrupted taste of the world, would cry him down for an idiot, or a man of no wit and learning. At this rate, the eternal wisdom of God, speaking through the prophets of old, was cast off like a piece of folly, and the true light and Enlightener of souls rejected like cheat and imposture: all which may serve us for instruction, viz. Not to over-value ourselves upon our parts and abilities; but considering, they are not given us for a gratification of pride, but to lay them out for advancing the glory of God, and the good of our fellow creatures.

§ 6. This simplicity of our Lord was again accompanied by a denial of his glory and majesty. So great was his condescension, that he did freely converse with sinners; and not only with the meanest, but with the worst of men: he did eat and drink with them: and this for no other reason, than thereby to answer the great errand he was sent on, which was, to "seek and to save that which was lost." It was on this account he was so grievously defamed with a multitude of black and odious names thrown upon him by his enemies; who taking advantage from his conduct, called him one time, a "gluttonous man, a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners:" another time, they exclaimed against him as a "Samaritan that had a devil." Nor did their rage and malice stop here, but they carried it at last so far, that they executed him in the midst of two thieves, he himself being reputed the greatest villain of the three, and, as it were, the very head of the gang. All which he suffered in order to "bear the sin of many, and to make intercession for the transgressors." How easily

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might he have acquired a great name, by the eminent holiness of his life, by that candour and unmixed innocency of manners that carried so resplendent a lustre with it! nay, even might he have gained a greater repute than John himself, who, according to the Lord's own testimony, was a "burning and shining light." But he readily renounced any such affectation of greatness and holiness, thereby to give check to all our superficial pretenders to piety and religion, too apt to value themselves and others, on account of an outward shew and appearance of godliness, or a nice and solicitous performance of some strict and legal duties: Though generally those that busy themselves so much about forms, modes, and circumstances of religion, have but little of the life and power of God within them.

§ 7. In short: The Lord forsook all that is great and pompous in the eye of the world. He was a king, and yet would he be subject to kings and magistrates, nay, to his father and mother, though never so mean and indigent. And truly, it is not without reason, that one of the sacred writers observes particularly, that "He went down with his parents to Nazareth, and was subject unto them," and, as some will have it, wrought at his father's trade. He was Lord over all, and yet when he came into the world, "He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister," clothing himself in all the dress of poverty and meanness. He was the great and wise prophet, nay, the substantial wisdom of God: and yet did he choose disciples of the lowest rank, a plain and simple sort of people, and not raised at all above the common level of men. And when it had been in his power to behave himself like a lord and master, at least in the small company of his followers; yet did he even divest himself of that right, being "among them as one that serveth." He did not at all assume any lord-like air over them, nor was he in the least fond of all the punctilios of honour due to him as to a master: but chose rather to be a master in life and doctrine,* than in any other distinguishing character of grandeur and pre-eminence. Thus when he taught the duty of obe-

* Non magister imperio, sed vita & doctrina.

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dience, he shewed at the same time a pattern of obedience in his own life and conduct. When he endeavoured to instil into his disciples a sense of humility, of patience, of subjection to their superiors, and of other christian virtues, he practised them first himself, that so his own example might have a more powerful influence upon the lives of others too, the practice, like an individual companion, thus going along with the doctrine itself. He has left us for this purpose, abundance of admirable instances of virtues: for being head and master, he thought it becoming his character to be chief also in bearing affronts, reproaches, injuries, poverty, misery, and in performing the most contemptible services, and even that of washing his disciples' feet. And thus he proved a master, head, and teacher, not in doctrine only; but in life also, in example, and practice.

§ 8. Alas! How are we now fallen away from so glorious, from so shining a pattern of virtue, into folly and vanity! Our head despised worldly honour, and lo! we are in pursuit after it. He submitted to crosses and trials, and we shrink back at the very sight thereof; unwilling to be disturbed in the enjoyment of our ease and prosperity. He became obedient unto death, and we, like libertines, indulge ourselves in all manner of licentiousness, as if self-will was now become the standing rule of our actions, not to be controlled in any thing at all. Alas! this does not agree in the least with the example the Lord has set before us, nor with the spiritual maxims contained in the book of life, which he himself has left us for imitation. Consider therefore, O man, how near the way wherein you walk, comes up to that excellent way wherein your Lord and Master himself walked. If you despise the narrow way of Jesus, and follow the way of the world now in vogue and fashion; then know for certain, that your way, though smooth and pleasing for a while, will end in utter destruction at last! And so much of the first head relating to the poor life of Christ.

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CHAP. XIV.

That the Lord Jesus by his patient suffering the Reproaches and Affronts of others, as also by his self-denying Life, hath taught us to despise the Honours and Pomps of the World.

ISAIAH liii. 3.—*He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.*

§ 1. THIS scripture contains the *second* head of the poor life of Christ, which is the *contempt* he endured from the world. After you have read over, and seriously considered the lesson of poverty, in the book of life exhibited by the Lord; consider now also the deep and unaffected humility which was so eminently seen in his whole life and conduct. Never did he catch the applauses of men; never was he acted by ambition, or any thirst to temporal honour and greatness: on the contrary, whenever men offered to bestow honours, praises and dignities upon him, he fled from it, he refused it, he declined it, both with words and deeds: never did he accept of any honour from men even when they would take him by force to make him a king.

§ 2. On the other hand, with what inexpressible humility did he bear all the insolencies, the reproaches, and calumnies wherewith his enemies loaded him! He himself (as was hinted before) was cried down for the vilest Samaritan, and his miracles, by a most malicious contrivance, ascribed to the power of Belzebub. That sound and salutary doctrine he brought down from heaven, was most daringly exploded like a piece of blasphemy; and he who taught it, every where insulted by foul and uncharitable censures, and such black lies and slanders as men were but able to contrive. In the progress of his years, it soon appeared, that his life was designed to be a scene of perpetual misery and contempt. He was betrayed and sold; he was denied and buffetted; he was spit upon and crowned with thorns; he was derided and scourged; he was smit-

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ten, and sentenced to death; he was quite rejected at last, and condemned to undergo the ignominious death of the cross. He was forsaken by God and men; and in fine, stripped of all, was executed in the midst of scandalous malefactors, hanging on the tree like a cursed one!

§ 3. He was then made the common gazing-stock of all his enemies, and hissed at by priests, scribes and elders. His prayers were turned into ridicule, his garments parted by lots, and at the approach of the very pangs of death, he had nothing to refresh himself but vinegar mingled with gall. At last, when all was finished, he expired on the cursed tree of the cross, full of the reproaches, hatred and indignation of the world; insomuch, that even after his death, he had his body pierced with a spear, and his grave made with the wicked. Nay, his enemies continued to foam with rage and malice, even when he had given up the ghost, and by calling him a deceiver, still murdered him with their cruel tongues, whose body they had but newly slain with their impious hands. Being risen at last from the dead, and triumphing over his enemies; they then boldly denied the truth of his resurrection, and left no stone unturned to blacken his divine character, and to run down all the transactions of his life, for cheat and imposture. Thus was the Lord, both in the beginning, progress, and exit of his ever-blessed life, "despised and rejected, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."

§ 4. In this course of our Lord's life, is not only displayed to us the abounding treasure of redemption gained by Christ, and of which he himself is the very source and basis; but also most clearly demonstrated, that in this scene of sufferings, he is our great doctor and master, our prophet and shepherd, our instructor, light, and constant monitor; that also we, by looking unto him, may learn to despise earthly pomp and greatness, and by closely adhering to him, like true members to their head, "grow up into him in all things," being rendered conformable unto his life, and rooted and grounded in his love.

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§ 5. But, alas! How is it possible we should be fit for so eminent a character of being members of Christ, whilst our life is so contrary to the life of him who is designed to be our head? Certainly, whilst in our actions, words, and endeavours, we do not entirely aim at God's glory, but our own; it is then most evident, that Christ does not live in us, but the prince of this world: It is then plain, that we are not yet got loose from the love and various ties of this world: For *whatsoever is born of God*, and loves the Lord, *overcomes the world*, and so is not overcome by it. Nor does such a one any more love the world; for if any man "love the world, the love of the Father is not in him;" and consequently, that of Christ neither.

§ 6. Upon the whole, let the life of Christ be unto us a constant and awakening monitor, to press after him, who is the captain of our salvation, and to die unto the world as he did. Consider the beginning, together with the progress, and final conclusion of his happy life, and nothing, you will say, speaks more loud, nothing is more evident, nothing more obvious to every one's eye, than his profound humility, wherewith he bore the contempt and reproaches of all those that love the world.

CHAP. XV.

How a Christian by Christ ought to bear, and to overcome the Adversity and Contempt of this World.

HEB. xii. 3.—*Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.*

§ 1. IT is a most moving complaint poured forth by the Messiah in these words: "I became a reproach unto them; when they looked upon me, they shaked their heads. Help me, O Lord my God; O save me according to thy mercy; that they may know that it is thy hand, that thou Lord hast done it. Let them curse, but bless thou: When they arise, let them be ashamed. but let thy servant rejoice. Let mine adversaries be

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clothed with shame, and let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a mantle. I will greatly praise the Lord with my mouth; yea, I will praise him among the multitude. For he shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save him from those that condemn his soul."

§ 2. This pathetic complaint of our dear Redeemer, every christian ought to be most lively affected with, and to represent it to himself like a mirror, therein most carefully to behold the life of Christ under the cross, together with that of all the saints in general. This way of the cross has been copiously spoken of in the book of Psalms, in order to render it the more familiar to us, and to teach us betimes, "that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." Such a consideration gives present ease and comfort under contempt and reproaches incident to the true followers of Christ, and uses them to a conformity of the image of Christ: which as it is one of the greatest honours our Master bestows on his disciples; so it is by the world hated and abhorred, as healing physic by a delicate and distempered palate. However, this conformity is the grand duty of a christian, inuring him to bear his Master's reproach and abject image in time, that he may also hereafter bear his glorious image in eternity. But as the aforesaid 109th Psalm contains at large a prayer of Christ expressed in the midst of his sufferings; so it mentions in the latter part, three sorts of troubles more particularly, wherewith the Lord, whose type David was, found himself oppressed.

§ 3. In the *first* place, the Lord complaineth of a vehement anxiety of heart, declared in this manner: "I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me." Behold, what complaints this sacred, this eminent person is reduced to! and what is the reason thereof? Surely, to acquaint us in most moving and affectionate terms, what he has suffered for our sake. He says: *I am poor!* And lo! you sweat and toil to get estates, to hoard up riches, and yet you are still poor and discontented in the possession of them. He says: *I am needy;* and you, O man, are entirely bent upon

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your ease, prosperity, and fulness of bread! He complains: *My heart is wounded within me.* How unreasonable is it then, O man! that you should be humoured and gratified in all your vain and carnal propensions! Nothing must run counter to your extravagant doings! Nothing will kindly go down with you but what is seasoned with mirth and alacrity; sorrow and melancholy being far banished from your heart; nay, not permitted at all to give you any disturbance in the fill of your enjoyments. But alas! how is it possible for a christian, never to reflect back upon the sad and sorrowful life of that Lord and Master, whose servant and disciple he pretends to be, and who has left him so fair and bright a pattern for imitation? He complains, that his heart was wounded within him; it was bruised, and as it were, smitten with rods, and exceeding heavy. Surely if nothing will compose you to a liking the cross of Christ, let at least the consideration of the sacredness of the afflicted person here represented, and infinitely exalted above you, work you into a ready compliance with his life. Such a consideration will give you ease and patience under any grief that may attend you, and make you relish the better those untainted pleasures which will certainly succeed the cross. Therefore think with yourself in this or the like manner: "I am now put to trouble and anxiety of heart; but the same did befal also my Lord and Master; whose very soul was surrounded with sorrows so heavy and acute, with pains so fierce and dreadful, that nothing of whatever I shall undergo, can equal them." However, the Lord, after the sufferings, entered into everlasting joy; after the contempt, into never-fading glory; through death into life, through hell into heaven: The scene was now altered, and a happy exchange followed, being no less than an exceeding weight of glory after a short weight of misery: And thus it will be with all the sincere followers of the Lord, to whom their crosses will prove but as many advances to a more excellent glory, and their affliction will be the very inlet into everlasting bliss and happiness.

§ 4. After the Lord had spoken of inward sorrow that pressed upon him he now goes on to give us, *sec-*

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ondly, a view of the infirmities of his body also: "I am gone, (says he,) like the shadow when it declineth: I am tossed up and down as the locust. My knees are weak through fasting, and my flesh faileth of fatness." A most expressive description of the common frailty of human nature! What is a shadow, but a mere nothing, an empty, lifeless appearance? To such an abject lowliness, to such an inconceivable degree of humiliation the Lord suffered himself to be reduced whilst he dwelt among us! He who is life and light itself, and the bottomless fountain of life and happiness, is exposed to labour and infirmities. And should not men hereby learn so much humility at least, as to think themselves far greater nothings, and more perishing shadows, than the Lord of life himself!

§ 5. But he goes on: "I am tossed up and down as the locust." The Lord had no settled habitation upon earth, as men of the world have, whose delight is in ample buildings, fixed entertainments, and stately palaces. He was in a constant pilgrimage towards that kingdom which cannot be moved. For this reason he is said to have only tabernacled among us, and is here compared to a locust, which, having no nest or abiding place, is fearful, and tossed to and fro, and driven away with every wind. And even in this has our blessed Saviour left us a pattern, to walk as he walked; and seeing we have no continuing city here, seek one to come, which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

§ 6. What is farther added of the weakness of his knees, and the failing of his flesh, did abundantly appear about the time of his passion, when his "strength was dried up like a potsherd;" and it may be a monitor to us under bodily diseases and infirmities. Should we complain (as many are apt to do) of a fit of sickness, when the Lord of life pined away into weakness, and languished in misery? Should we pamper our bodies, when the Lord endured faintness and fastings? And what matters it how languid, weak and neglected our body be, if our soul and spiritual life be but in a vigorous habit? It is this on which we ought to lay out our

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time and diligence: It is this we ought to look after most carefully: It is this which ought to eat that which is good, and delight itself in spiritual fatness, that so it may grow strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

§ 7. *Thirdly*, the Lord explains the great contempt he underwent in this world, thereby to stop us in our pursuit after vain honour, and to break us from our pride and self esteem. "I am (says he) a reproach unto them, when they look upon me, they shake their heads." The enemies of Christ insulted him in the vilest and most licentious manner, expressing even by signs and gestures, the scornful and scoffing temper they harboured within. What indignity like to this! All which the anointed of the Lord endured for no other end, than to rescue mankind from eternal scorn and infamy: For man being become a scorner and hater of God, defying him and the offers of his grace; Christ was now designed to make atonement for so heinous a sin, by the extreme contempt he willingly embraced. However, as the Lord by his humble submission to the contempt of the world, has laid a mighty obligation on all christians to be his followers therein; so the considerations here annexed, may be of great use for supporting a man under sufferings of that nature.

§ 8. First consider, that in bearing the contempt of the world, you bear no less than the very image of Christ, and follow him who is the head, master, and captain of your salvation.

(2.) To be contemned and disrespectfully used by the world, is of great efficacy for improving yourself in true humility; a virtue of so divine and heavenly an extraction, as to be only fit to receive the influence of divine grace. "For God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble."

(3.) Your suffering reproaches for the sake of truth, is an evidence, you are ranked with the cloud of those noble witnesses, who in all ages have been made as "the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things," and so continue to be esteemed unto this day.

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(4.) Remember that those that are come out of great tribulation, shall be before the throne of God at last, and be there confessed before the angels of God.

(5.) What matters it, how contemptibly the world uses you, since you are not to rise in the last day, as some shall, "to shame and everlasting contempt," (the Lord having redeemed you from that) but to honour and glory; this being the lot and reward of all those that have here endured the affronts and revilings of a wicked world.

§ 9. (6.) The world, like an imperious mistress, frowns on all those that get loose from her tyranny. But when the world frowns, then God favours. When men withdraw their kindness, then God confers and shews mercy. For this purpose prays the Psalmist. "Help me, O Lord my God: O save me according to thy mercy: That they may know, that this is thy hand, that thou Lord hast done it." As the Lord removed at last his Son from the cross, from all the labours of his soul, from all the insults of his vile enemies, and crowned him with glory in heaven: Thus he will deal with you also, if you continue faithful in bearing the cross, together with all the injuries and indignities of a profane world. On that day shall the world stand amazed at the dignity of a glorified saint, and at the strangeness of his salvation, so far beyond all that they looked for. But they shall see the scene is now altered, and know it is the Lord's hand that has done it.

(7.) It was God himself who suffered his beloved Son to be thus contemned, reproached, and reviled, according to that of David, who was a type of Christ both in his troubles and triumphs: "Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face." Remember therefore, that the same God, who ordered a bitter cup to be drunk off by his dear Son, has also allotted you your set of trials, "to humble thee, and to know what is in thy heart."

(8.) Be sure, that the Lord will change all the undeserved reproaches thrown upon you, into so many blessings, and in his own time, bring shame and confusion

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upon scoffers. This is expressed in the following verse: "Let them curse, but bless thou: When they arise, let them be ashamed; but let thy servants rejoice." Nay, if the wicked curse never so much, yet shall the curse causeless, never come, as plainly appears from Balaam's attempt, who could not curse whom God had not cursed: Whereas, on the contrary, "whosoever feareth the Lord, it shall go well with him at the last, and he shall find favour in the day of his death." The same blessing is bestowed on Abraham, and on all those that walk in the steps of his faith: "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee." And in another place, we have this encouragement: "Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings." And our Redeemer himself has declared: "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you." And his apostle: "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you."

§ 10. (9.) The Lord goes on in the aforesaid psalm: "I will greatly praise the Lord with my mouth; yea, I will praise him among the multitude." Christ triumphs at last over his sufferings, and returns now thanks to his heavenly Father for the very crosses and reproaches allotted him. This is the temper of every sincere christian. He has that heroic nobleness, that elevation of mind in him, as to be thankful in the midst of afflictions and reproaches, whilst he but looks on the hand of that kind Father which entails all this upon him. And truly, the Lord never inflicts any sore judgment on a soul, but he affords her at the same time a sufficient reason for thanking and blessing him for that affliction. Thus is gratitude the happy product of crosses and trials. And this consideration is fit to sweeten the duty of resignation to the will of God. For he that for the love of Christ, readily submits to the contempt and revilings of a vain world, shall be honoured by God again, both in this world and in the other. For there is a time, wherein the Lord "raises up the poor out of the dust, and lifts the needy out of the dunghill; that he may set him with princes, even with the princes of his people." Surely it argues an excellent spirit and a virtuous constitution

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of soul, whenever a man for Christ's sake bears the insults of the wicked, and maintains an unshaken calmness and evenness of mind in the midst of all the storms and calumnies of the world; the "ornament of a meek and quiet spirit being in the sight of God of great price."

(10.) At last our psalm concludes: "For he shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save him from those that condemn his soul." Here is comfort enough to make a christian bear up against the hardships, reproaches, and straits he is like to meet with in his warfare. There is never a word, the Lord will stand at the right of the violent and great ones, of the oppressors and persecutors of the innocent; but he will stand at the right hand of the poor, who having no arm or support of men to rely on, flee to the Lord alone for help and refuge, as to the sole object of their faith and dependance. Those are remembered, when he makes inquisition for blood; and those are the afflicted, or the humble, whose cry the Lord doth not forget. And Tertullian tells us: "We are then absolved by God, when the world condemns us:" who also usually frustrates the machinations of the wicked. For though these watch the righteous, and seek to slay him; yet will the Lord not leave him in their hand, nor condemn him when he is judged. Behold, O man! thus will the Lord attend you with a wonderful deliverance, if you continue faithful and patient to the end. There will be reason enough to extol his name for the few wearisome paces that have brought you happily to the land of rest and delight. The pleasant remembrance of this great reward should, methinks, endear unto you the duty of patience, and encourage you at the same time, to be fervent in the practice of so noble a virtue. Certainly David himself "had fainted, unless he had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait therefore on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord." Cast not away your confidence. It is but after a little while when your great Protector will hide you in the secret of his presence from the pride of man. Therefore "judge nothing before the time, until the

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Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God."

CHAP. XVI.

How Christians are to seek their Honour and Glory in Christ; and how they may obtain the same.

PSALM cix. 1.—*Hold not thy peace, O God, my praise.*

§ 1. THIS is a prayer of the Son of God, spoken in a prophetical spirit, (as indeed the whole Psalm is) and foretelling both the sufferings of Christ, and his afflicted members; and the triumph of faith, or of an entire dependance upon God, attended with an utter extirpation of all his enemies: The purport or substance of the first words of our Lord's prayer may be expressed fuller in this manner:

"O my heavenly Father, thou knowest, how I in this world have not sought mine own glory, but the glory of thine holy name, and the salvation of all men: And therefore was I so bitterly persecuted, blasphemed, contemned, and reproached. Nevertheless, this is my comfort, that thou art my Father, and that I am thy only begotten son: for, lo! this is my glory, and this is my praise in heaven with thee; and this my glory wilt thou in due time manifest and bring to light; that by thy glorifying me, the world may see whom it is they have persecuted and blasphemed. Father, glorify thy name; and hold not thy peace, O my glory, and my God!"

§ 2. Now hence we are to learn, that those have the greatest glory and praise in heaven, who in this world are the most persecuted for righteousness' sake: This we shall learn from the example of our Lord himself, whereby we are encouraged to endure the cross, without being wearied in our minds, as looking unto him who endured such continual "contradiction of sinners

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against himself." For from him, in him, and out of him, it is appointed that we should learn true wisdom, as out of a true book of life; and thereby obtain a right knowledge and holy understanding of God and heavenly matters. But that we may the better transcribe the life of Christ in our own conduct and conversation, let us carefully observe the following particulars:

§ 3. (1.) Christ never sought upon earth his own glory in any thing that he did; but accounted it sufficient for him, that God alone was his glory. So let us then in like manner reject the empty glory and praises of this world in whatever we do; endeavouring only that God may be glorified in us, saying, "Ah, Lord God! give us also such a heart, even the heart of Christ thy Son, that we may have our glory in thee alone, and not in ourselves: that we may have our glory in heaven only, and not upon earth."

(2.) It was the highest glory of the Lord Christ, that he was the *only begotten Son of God.* And for this reason did the world persecute, vilify, and blaspheme him: so should a christian look for no other honour than what he enjoys in the paternal love of God, by the witness of the Spirit residing within him.

"Grant us also, dear Father, we beseech thee, that it may be our greatest glory and joy, that we are thy children; that so we may obtain the eternal fruition of thy love and faithfulness, and may, through this our christian childship, come to possess in thee an everlasting inheritance: and that we may remember, how, that if the world hate, envy, reproach, and persecute us, it hath done the very same before to thy most holy child Jesus."

(3.) It is the glory of the Lord Christ, that he wrought so many divine works, that he went about continually doing the most wondrous acts of beneficence and royal grace to mankind, and that out of pure love only, and the highest compassion to the miseries of fallen nature. However, for all this, he received nothing but hatred and a most heinous unthankfulness. Hence also our hearts ought to break forth in some such manner as this:

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§ 4. " Ah ! loving God ! give us then such generous, such grateful, such faithful hearts, as we may be always ready to do good to as many as possibly we can ; and that we may never be deterred from acts of charity, either by the gross unthankfulness of a hardened world, or by the unworthiness of the objects we bestow them on ; ascribing not to ourselves, but to thy name only, the glory of all we do."

(4.) It is the highest glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he has, out of pure love, laid down his life for us, that he has purchased us with his own blood, that he has been obedient to the Father, even unto death, that with the greatest meekness he has endured the vilest reproach, and with the utmost patience he has borne the exquisite pains of the cross. Let therefore the fire of devotion kindled within, break forth into these, or the like expressions :

" O God, our glory, help ! help us, that we may also overcome our enemy with love, subdue our flesh with godly obedience, bear the reproach of the world with the meekness and long-suffering of Christ, obtain the victory through patience ; and being thus made strong in the Lord, be more than conquerors through him that loved us !"

(5.) The sovereign glory of the blessed Jesus, our dearest Lord, is his exaltation to the right hand of God : and the name which is given him by this glorification, which is a name " above every name, that every knee both in heaven and in earth must bow to his name, and all tongues be obliged to confess him to be their Lord."

§ 5. " Help, O gracious God ! Help, loving Father ! O help us, that we may ever esteem it our highest glory to be made conformable to our ever-blessed head and Saviour ; that so, when he shall be hereafter revealed in power and majesty, we also may appear with him in glory, after we have here endured the cross, and been faithful to the end !"

(6.) The glory of Christ the Lord, is, that he is the only *Head* of his church in general, and of every member thereof in particular ; a glorious *King* of his people ;

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and an everlasting *High-Priest*, making intercession for us.

"Help us with thy grace, O God, most gracious, that we may evermore account it our greatest glory, that we are the members of thy Son, that we are the subjects of his kingdom, and that we may enjoy all the privileges and benefits purchased by his high-priestly intercession, sacrifice, and benediction."

§ 6. (7.) Another branch of the glory of Christ, is, that God has most wonderfully displayed and magnified his name throughout the whole world: And has, in opposition to all his enemies, blasphemers, and persecutors, who would not own him to be the Son of God, in the most public and solemn manner attested his cause, declared him to be his Son by mighty signs and wonders, and established faith in his name, amongst many nations and languages, maugre all the malice and policy of hell and satan. For notwithstanding God held his peace for a while, and vailed the glory of his Son with the mystery of the cross; yet was this only designed, that it might break forth the more gloriously hereafter, and like the sun, hid a while under a cloud, shine with the greater lustre, when now the cloud is withdrawn, and the whole earth, from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof, called upon to behold the unspotted beauty, and the bright glory of the Sun of Righteousness, darting forth healing in his beams. For out of Sion now God appears in perfect beauty: Yea, our God comes who is Immanuel; and he shall not keep silence always; his voice being so powerful, that there is neither speech nor language where it is not heard; and his circuit so universal, that from the light and heat thereof, nothing shall be hid, every one speaking of his praise, and bowing before his footstool. So also in like manner, notwithstanding God may seem now and then to keep silence for a while, and, as it were, to hold his peace when his church is insulted and persecuted; yet there is nothing more certain, than that (when the short hour of probation is over) he will no longer keep silence, but with a high hand, deliver us from the reproach which we suffered, and *remove his stroke away from us*, that we may rejoice in his

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salvation. However, *it doth not yet appear what we shall then be.*

§ 7. The conclusion now of the whole matter is this: It is God who is to be our glory alone; it is not the world, nor wealth, nor honour, nor greatness, nor the arm of flesh, nor the wit and prudence of men, that I may call my glory; but God, and only God, is my glory! Wherefore, "let not the wise man glory in his wisdom," as it is written, "neither let the mighty man glory in his might, nor let the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord."

CHAP. XVII.

How, after the Example of Christ, and of all other Saints, we may overcome Calumny.

ps. cii. 8.—*Mine enemies reproach me all the day: And they that are mad against me, are sworn against me.*

§ 1. AMONG the many crosses and troubles of a christian, a false and slanderous tongue is none of the least, as from the example of Christ himself we may evidently see; whom pharisaical serpents and vipers, with their envenomed tongues, both in his life, and at his death, did most maliciously sting. Herein left the Lord a pattern of heroic patience to every christian who must not think to escape, when their great Master himself was wounded with the blows of malicious tongues. For the more conformable any one is to Christ, and the more zealous a follower he is of his steps, the more is he insulted by false and deceitful tongues. This appears plainly from the example of holy David, who was most miserably plagued by slanderers, as he himself bitterly complains in these following Psalms: iii, iv, x, xii, xv, xxxi, l, lii, lv, lviii, lxiv, lxix, cii, cxx, and cxl.

§ 2. Nay, there is hardly one of all the prophets of old, who did not feel these deadly arrows shot against

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them, by murdering tongues; of which Jeremiah makes mention, saying: "Their false tongues are murderous arrows shot out: with their mouth they speak peaceably to their neighbour, but in their heart they lie in wait to destroy." Wherefore all honest hearts ought to take heed not to be defiled by backbiters, but to be warded against them. For as he that handles a man seized with a leprosy, or a high infectious distemper, must expect to be also infected: so he that gives ear to lying tongues, too often catches the same distemper; the poison of slandering insensibly working itself into all those that do not betimes fly from it. Now since a christian is forbidden to retort evil for evil, as that which agrees not with christian faith; there is no other counsel hence, but that by a conscience void of offence, he must fetch his comfort from those divine oracles the Lord has furnished him with for that purpose.

§ 3. Let your first comfort be the example of Christ and of all saints. For it fares no worse with us herein, than with Christ our head, and with all that have ever been most dear to him. Nothing of this kind has befallen us, which has been not before in all ages undergone by them. And since the examples of others have generally a powerful influence on our lives, and readily offer themselves to our remembrance in time of trouble and tribulation; we may therefore improve all those examples for an encouragement to bear our treatment also with patience and cheerfulness, for the sake of the joy that usually springs up out of the reproach of the cross. Look then upon the Prince of your salvation, look upon the lives of all the saints of old, such as have been the greatest lights in their generation.

§ 4. Consider, particularly, the example of Moses, who esteemed the reproach of Christ better than the crown of Egypt; and who, by reason of the continual contradictions he underwent, is said to have been a "man the most afflicted* above all the men which were

* Our version renders it, "Now the man Moses was very meek;" but in many other places, the same word which here occurs, is rendered by *afflicted*; the original bearing both significations. The practice of meekness is furthered by affliction. Conf. Ainsworth, in h. l.

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upon the face of the earth." And what shall we say of David? He was truly in his time, the very mark, as it were, at which all the false tongues in the land shot their murderous arrows. Wherefore "mine enemies, (said he) revile me all the day long: and they that are mad upon me, are sworn together against me." That is, they affronted him daily with the reproach of his misery, turning him, as it were, into a proverb, and offering him the most heinous indignity that can be offered to a man. And what shall we say of Job? How was he upbraided by his friends, and grieved with their tongues! And how fell Daniel, that holy prophet, into the mouths of the ungodly, as into an open sepulchre, yea, as into a den of lions! but how powerfully did the Lord deliver Moses, and Job, and Daniel! all these are gone before you, and their examples being duly considered, will stir up in you a spirit of holy emulation, and draw you into the same way of the cross by which they entered into the kingdom of God. See and behold, there goes your Lord Jesus before you, pursued with the curses and revilings of the pharisee! See! there goes Moses before, and the faction of Corah, Dathan, and Abiram following behind with execrations in their mouths, and stones in their hands, to rid themselves of him! See, there goes David before in sore trials, and Shimei behind, cursing his king! see, there goes the society of the apostles of our Lord before, and a faithless multitude behind stopping their ears, and running madly upon them!

§ 5. But then it is not enough, slightly only, and superficially, to reflect on the example of the saints: but we must learn also to be followers of them, when we are tried as they were, copying in every tribulation after their meekness and patience. For, tell me, how shall meekness appear, or how shall patience be exercised, if you be not contradicted; or there be none to deride, slander, and vilify you? Wherefore you must now patiently take up your cross with them, and meekly follow the Lord Christ in the steps he has left you. This argues a christian generosity, and a temper that becomes a disciple of the blessed Jesus. This is also agreeable to

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your calling; being indeed called to suffer with your Saviour, not to avenge yourself, not to return evil for evil; not to revile again being reviled, not to threaten being slandered, but quietly to commit your cause to him that judgeth righteously. In this manner you must, out of the good treasure of your heart, bring forth good words for the bad which you have received; because evil tongues must give account in the day of judgment, of every idle word they have spoken. And this, certainly, will at the last day prove a burden heavy enough. Leave all therefore to the Lord, to do as he pleases, who will not fail to do right. Recompense and vengeance belongs to him. The ungodly may boast never so much, and be never so confident in their own inventions, yet shall their foot slide in time. But as for you, O christian, fix your eye on the Lord Jesus, and the lamb-like frame of his mind. "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so opened he not his mouth."

§ 6. From the examples of the saints, we are in the next place to learn a sovereign remedy, which they did make use of against the venom of evil tongues; which is *prayer*. They prayed; and so they were healed, and were comforted. When they were bitterly cursed by their adversaries, they sent up only their cry to God, saying: "Let them curse, but bless thou." See, and ponder the whole book of Psalms throughout. How did David defend himself with prayer as with a wall of iron, against the blows of false tongues! they are all foolish marksmen, who bend their bow against the innocent; and draw the sword to slay such as are of a right conversation. For their lies and slanders shall return at last upon their own heads, and shall enter into their own bowels, as it is written: "Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken." All this shall be set to rights by prayer: And the steps of a good man shall be established. For whenever any one prays earnestly against an evil-speaker, or a liar, it is as much as if he wrestled and fought with him; just as

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David wrestled with Goliah, or as the rod of Moses with the Egyptian sorcerers. For here fight two spirits with each other; (which renders it the more fierce and violent) that is, the prayer of faith proceeding from the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth; and the spirit of lies proceeding from the devil, the spirit of falsehood, and the father of lies. However, all these devilish serpents of the Egyptians shall be subdued in fine, and, as it were, swallowed up by the divine rod of Moses; that is, by prayer.

§ 7. Another remedy against the poison of a wicked tongue, used also by the saints, is the frequent reading and meditating upon the word of God. This is an excellent means of consolation and refreshment, whenever a soul is pursued and set upon by enemies. For an upright heart hunted by men of falsehood and malice, is like a hart whose thirst increases by being hunted; and as this brays and pants after the water-brooks; so must needs a soul in affliction, long after the cooling streams of the divine word, and be athirst for the living waters of grace, thereby to be quickened and refreshed in her spiritual drought. It is by this word of grace the Lord revives a drooping soul, speaking to her in a kind and condescending manner: "Blessed are ye, (says our great Master,) when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." In which most comfortable saying of our Lord, is laid down a three-fold ground of comfort, worthy to be remarked: 1st, *blessed are ye.* 2dly, *rejoice.* And 3dly, *great is your reward.* Who therefore would not be willing, for the sake of so great and endless a good, to endure here a little while reproach and persecution? Yea, who would not even rejoice, since he is made by this means a partaker of Christ's sufferings, in order, that when Christ's glory shall be revealed from heaven, he may also partake with his Lord in the exceeding joy thereof? "Blessed are ye, if ye be reproached for the name of Christ, for the Spirit of glory resteth upon you." Re-

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member also, that it is *good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth;* that he *sit alone and keep silence*, when he hath any laid upon him to bear; yea, that he *put his mouth in the dust*, and wait in hope; and that he *give his cheek to him that smiteth him*, when he is *filled full with reproach. For the Lord will not cast off forever.*

§ 8. You are further to learn, that the persecution of the tongue is a hellish storm, which will soon blow over. Now as a traveller is not disheartened at any stormy and tempestuous weather he is like to meet with upon the road, but provides himself the more for it: so let our spiritual pilgrim, in his weary steps towards the holy land, or the new Jerusalem, be never cast down by storms and dangers, by sweat and toil incident to travellers; but let him go on in hope, and continue faithful to his journey's end; when the contentment and delight after all his tiresome paces, shall be infinitely sweet and transcendent, and the fearful wilderness, wherein he has been tempted for a while, lead him at last to the glorious sight and enjoyment of his Saviour. "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted" at present! Is it a strange thing that has happened unto you? What is more common to a traveller, than to be overtaken by foul and showery weather? A plodding diligence will for all that bring him home safe and sound.

§ 9. The world spend their time in mirth and laughter, and make every one a gazing-stock, that looks but with an earnest aspect upon the dalliances and frolics of profane men, and drops a serious word in favour of virtue. What is this day the fate of one good christian, may be to morrow the fate of another, according as the humour of the world works, who lets none pass uncensured that is not for their turn. After a true christian is once exposed to public contempt, every one flings dirt at him, till the spirit of lying and slandering has wearied them out at last; and then they turn the edge of their tongues upon the next that comes in their way. "Well, say they, let our hearts cheer us in the day of our youth, and let all care be drowned in laughter, and any serious speech be banished from our company. And because

the righteous upbraids us with offending the law by our doings, we will examine him with despitefulness and torture, that we may know his meekness, and prove his patience."

§ 10. The best method a christian can take in all these storms, is to be quiet under them, and to keep the mind free from anger and bitterness. He that thinks every offensive word to be a stain to his character, which ought to be wiped off carefully, will often render things the worse by it. Hence it remains, that the most effectual way to stop the fury of slanderous tongues is to yield to it for the present, and patiently wait till time itself sets things to rights again. He that will dispute every thing at the sword's point, as it were, is like him that has been stung by a bee, and being thereby put in a passion, runs himself headlong upon the whole bee-hive to be revenged, by turning it quite upside down; which he had better not have done, than to feel the smart afterwards which must needs attend so rash an attempt. And does not the fire of malicious tongues burn the fiercer, when we seek to quench it by too hasty efforts? And does it not even convert that into *fuel*, which was designed to diminish the flame?

§ 11. A tongue that is set on fire of hell is like that serpent, which, as some tell us, brings forth seven other heads when you cut off but one in order to destroy it. Thus a wicked tongue is so far from being restrained by contradiction, that it will spread the farther by it, and broach seven lies instead of one. Whereas he that is deaf to popular rumours, and not easily alarmed at every little noise, will not only better repel the darts of malignant tongues, but enjoy also a calm and unshaken tranquillity both of soul and body, in the midst of all the boisterous storms of the world; this being the sweet reward, which usually attends a patient and submissive frame of mind. This is a truly noble and magnanimous method to overcome the worst of enemies, and to get a full conquest at last over the most stubborn and untractable temper. He that rejects this heroic meekness of soul, sets himself entirely out of God's guard, and, whilst he endeavours eagerly to save his name and reputation, must needs be

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more harassed with perpetual alarms of malignant tongues, inflamed by the common enemy of souls.

§ 12. Besides this, there are some other particular reasons, why the Lord permits his children to be insulted by sharp and virulent tongues. When David in his sore troubles was reviled and cursed by Shimei, one of the basest of men, he said no more, than "let him curse, for the Lord hath bidden him." And what other reason can be assigned for this, but that the Lord hereby seeks to preserve his children, lest they exalt themselves above measure, on account of such eminent gifts as have been conferred upon them; and at the same time improve themselves more and more in the practice of mutual love, mildness, and humility, as the gospel requires? What is said by David of Shimei, that he was bidden to curse his king, is expressed by Job in more general terms: "He poureth contempt upon princes." And who is able to fathom here all the mysterious depths of divine judgments? the carnal mind does not like at all to be reviled, to be insulted, to be under-valued. To *become a fool in this world*, though it be recommended by an apostle as a means for attaining true wisdom; yet is it not liked now a-days, because it is too opposite to self-love. Pride and self love naturally adhere to us: nay, it is an evil which by carnal generation is woven, as it were, into the very heart and interior faculties of the soul, whence it taints all the actions proceeding from it. Every one aspires now after greatness and dignities, titles and preferments. Every one loves now to be extolled, and to be much made of, to be esteemed and admired. Alas! It is this self-conceit, this natural self-love, which, having once besotted mankind, propagates now nothing but error and folly in the whole world: It was this self-love that ruined both Lucifer and Adam, and stript them entirely of the divine love and life wherewith once they were adorned.

§ 13. This spirit of self-love being thus seated in the heart, it continually alarms the soul, and engrosses all the faculties to itself. None but those that are inspired with a heavenly courage, can overcome the malignancy of an evil so strong and boundless, and so deeply rooted

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within. But to facilitate this victory, the Lord thinks as it were, with himself: "I will permit a virulent lying tongue to insult over such an one, as I formerly permitted Satan to infest my servants Job and Paul for their greater humiliation. This slandering tongue shall be his devil, his scourge, his plague, to buffet him constantly, and help to beat down that proud heart, that haughty look, that aspiring temper, which without this restraint, would at last carry all before it." Thus the Lord leaves nothing untried to use the soul to that excellent spirit of humility, and to set due bounds to the impetuous acting of the spirit of self-love, whereby men are now become allies to Lucifer, that great apostate spirit: who, endeavouring to have a will of his own, opposite to that of his maker, lost entirely his principality, and that original integrity wherein he was created at first.

§ 14. However, as the Lord is faithful on his side, and has no pleasure at all in the destruction, but preservation of his creatures; so he seeks also to convert the venom of impious tongues thrown on his children, into a precious medicine, thereby to heal that sore of self-love fostering within, and breeding abundance of other spiritual diseases in the mind. When the world thinks evil against them, then God brings good out of the evil, which is an art only known by God. For as out of the most poisonous serpent an antidote is prepared against poison itself; so God overrules the very worst of counsels, so as they shall turn to the greatest good of his children. Thus "out of the eater comes forth meat," and out of the bitter, sweetness; all things being made to "work together for good to them that love God." For instance, they are taught thereby to practise one of the noblest of the works of charity, which is to "bless their enemies, and to pray for them who despitefully use them."

§ 15. He that has thus far got the conquest over the bent of his corrupt nature, as to pray heartily for his enemies, is, methinks, almost arrived to the sublimest degree of true evangelical charity, which alone is able to soften our stubborn hearts into the mild and compassionate heart and mind of Christ, who also has set us a

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most blessed exemplar in this matter: "Father, (said he) forgive them; for they know not what they do." And this tender and sympathising heart a christian must needs have, if ever he wishes to be in a condition to pray for his enemies. True love, wherever it is rooted in a soul, there it will most certainly produce a tender commiseration towards enemies; who at the same time, whilst they hate men, render themselves entirely unfit for any communion with God and Christ, giving up their heart to the devil, that great hater of souls. And this may move every christian to commiserate the fate of such profligate wretches, who are not of God, but of their father, the devil: And lest they should forever sink into the jaws of the devil, who here inspires them with hatred, rage, and bitterness, the Lord so earnestly commands his children to pray for them, with this motive annexed to the command: "That ye may be the children of your Father who is in heaven."

§ 16. What has been said of the over-ruling power of God, whereby he converts the venom of lying tongues into a healing medicine, will more fully appear from the following instances: Joseph had never been exalted to the dignity of being ruler over all the land of Egypt, had he not fallen before under the malicious lashes of a wanton tongue, and thereby been condemned to a prison at last. However, wisdom did not leave him in bonds, but brought him, at length, the sceptre of the kingdom, and power against those that oppressed him. Had Moses not been persecuted by violent accusations of his enemies, and obliged to flee from the face of Pharaoh, he had not seen the Lord in the bush, after having led Jethro's flock to the back-side of the desert. For here by a wonderful sight he enjoyed, he was, as it were, initiated into a new dispensation of life, which then rose upon him. Thus did the spiteful tongue of Doeg, the Edomite, and of other enemies of David, force many a comfortable psalm from the latter, now left upon record for a support of the church in troubles and trials. The same over-ruling wisdom of God appeared for Daniel, when by the virulency of his accusers, he was cast

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into the den of lions, but most triumphantly exalted again by Divine Providence, for many good and noble ends; the enemies themselves being made to lay the foundation for his rise and greatness. Mordecai had almost the same providence. His ruin was devised by the murdering tongue of proud Haman; but the Lord returned his wickedness upon his own head, and the bloody machinations did but hasten the destruction of the contriver.

§ 17. Therefore "commit thy way unto the Lord: trust in him, and he shall bring it to pass. He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day." Only endeavour to be in constant amity with the Lord your God, and to love him with all your heart, and then he will direct your steps: For "when a man's ways please the Lord, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him." If the world be permitted to stain your reputation here, and to detract from your honour; what matters it, if the Lord dignifies you with a crown of eternal glory? It is he that will deliver and honour you at last; and it is he that will give you both grace here, and glory hereafter.

§ 18. Another comfort in trials of this nature, may be drawn from the powerful influence the Lord has upon the hearts of all men. It is he that looks upon all the inhabitants of the earth, from the firm place of his habitation. He alone fashions or frames their hearts, and considers all their works; and he will not deliver you into the will of your enemies. A man fumes often with rage and malice, and is transported to that degree of fury and passion, as if he would bear down all that comes in his way: But a little while after, you shall find, that, by an unexpected turn of providence, the man is altogether cooled again; his heat is allayed, and he is now reduced to such a gentleness and moderation of temper, as if he was become quite another man. Nay, how often do we see that the most profligate wretch, designing nothing but spite and malice against a good soul, is stopt in the midst of his passionate pursuit, and with a sweet force and holy violence, as it were, obliged not only ntirely to drop his wicked design, but to bestow also

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tokens of favour and kindness upon the person whom he was to affront. Which certainly is an operation peculiar to the wisdom of God, who, by his secret and over-ruling power, often renders abortive the most malicious project conceived against his children. Thus the Lord came to Laban, when incensed against Jacob, and ordered him to speak not to him, either good or bad: And Esau, who bore his brother no good will at all; yet when he came within sight of him, must needs run to meet him, to embrace him, to fall on his neck, to kiss him, to weep over him, and to receive him with the most endearing expressions of love and kindness.

§ 19. It is the nature of a malignant tongue, to swell high all on a sudden, and by rage and fury gain applause and admiration every where: but then its downfal is as sudden again, as the rise was before. Calumny is like a fire, whose outrageous flame mounts up to the very sky; but then the want of fuel will soon make it go down again. The reason is, because God, who is the everlasting truth itself, hates a spirit of lies beyond any thing: and this is the reason also, why all those that have raised their greatness, on no other foundation than lying and self-conceit, may indeed dazzle the eyes of others with a glaring lustre for a while; but when they now think themselves to be fixed in a stability not to be shaken; then generally their ruin is ready at hand, and the Lord's judgment destroys all. Then "the lying lips are put to silence, which spoke grievous things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous." Which text plainly shows, that pride and disdain of others, is wont to accompany a slandering and lying tongue. But "wo unto thee that dealest treacherously; when thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee. For the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous; lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity." Though a treacherous man may go on a while in quest after more honour and greatness; yet shall evil hunt the violent man at last, and overthrow him.

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§ 20. For a fuller explanation of what has been said on this head, consider also the following texts drawn from the Psalms of David :

Psal. iii. "Thou, Lord, art a shield for me ; my glory, and the lifter-up of my head. Up, Lord, and help me, O my God ; for thou smitest all mine enemies on the cheek-bone ; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly."

Psal. iv. "O Lord, how long shall mine honour be turned into shame ? How long shall men have such pleasure in vanity, and be so prone to lying ? But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself, and wonderfully conducteth him. The Lord heareth when I call unto him."

Psal. v. "Thou, Lord, shalt destroy them that speak deceitfully ; for both the blood-thirsty and the deceitful are an abomination unto thee. In their mouths there is no conscience at all ; in their inward parts, there is the heart sickness : Their throat is an open sepulchre ; and with their tongues they play the hypocrite. Wherefore thou shalt cause them to perish through their own imaginations, and in the multitude of their ungodliness, to fall by their own inventions. But all them that trust in thee, O Lord, shall rejoice : And they that love thy name, shall be joyful in thee ; and because thou defendest them, shall they be ever giving of thanks. For thou, Lord, givest thy blessing to the righteous, and crownest him with thy grace ; defending him therewith as with a shield."

§ 21. Psal. vi. "All mine enemies therefore shall be confounded, and sore vexed : They shall be turned back, and put to shame suddenly."

Psal. vii. "O Lord, my God ! in thee have I put my trust : Save me therefore from all them that persecute me ; and deliver thou me, lest they devour my soul like lions, and tear it in pieces, while there is none to help. O let the wickedness of the ungodly come to an end ! Behold, he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood. He hath graven and digged up a pit ; and is fallen himself into the destruction that he made for another. His

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mischief shall return upon his own head, and his rashness shall fall on his own pate."

Psal. xvii. "Keep me as the apple of an eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings, from the ungodly that trouble me: from mine enemies that compass me round about to take away my soul."

§ 22. Psal. xviii. "I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised: So shall I be safe from mine enemies. In my trouble, I will call upon the Lord, and will complain unto my God: So shall he hear my voice out of his holy temple. And my complaint shall come before him, who shall take me out of many waters: Yea, it shall enter even into his ears; who is my Saviour, my God, and my might, in whom I will forever trust. What if the sorrows of death compass me about? Or, what if the overflowings of ungodliness make me afraid? I will call upon thee, O Lord, my strength and my buckler! The horn also of my salvation, and my refuge! For who is God but the Lord? Or who hath any strength except our God? It is thou, Lord, that girdest me with strength, and makest my way perfect. Thou hast given me the defence of thy salvation: Thy right hand also shall hold me up; and thy loving correction shall make me great. Since it is thou that deliverest me from my cruel enemies; and settest me up above mine adversaries. Thou shalt deliver me from the strivings of the people: Thou shalt rid me from the wicked man. For this cause will I give thanks unto thee, O Lord."

§ 23. Ps. xxvii. "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear? The Lord Jehovah is the strength of my life; of whom then shall I be afraid? Wherefore when the wicked, mine enemies and my foes, come upon me, as if they meant to eat up my flesh; they shall stumble and fall. Yea, though a whole host of men were laid against me, yet shall not my heart in the least be afraid. And though there should rise up war against me on every side, yet will I still put my trust in him; who in the time of trouble shall hide me in his tabernacle, and save me from the lion's mouth, and from the power of the dog. Yea, in the secret place of his dwelling shall he hide me, and set me

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up as upon a rock of stone, which never shall be moved. For the Lord shall lift up mine head above mine enemies that are round about me, and that are too mighty for me. Teach me then thy way, O Lord, and lead me in the right path, because of mine enemies. Give me not over into the will of mine adversaries: O deliver me not over unto them. For, lo! there are false witnesses risen up against me, and such as speak deceit, and breathe out cruelty. Nevertheless, I believe that I shall yet see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait then therefore on the Lord, O my soul: Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thee: Wait, I say, on the Lord."

§ 24. Ps. xxxi. "I said, thou art my God, and my times are in thy hand. Deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute my soul. Let the lying lips be put to silence, which cruelly, disdainfully, and despitefully speak against the righteous. O how plentiful is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee: And that thou hast prepared for them that put their trust in thee, even before the sons of men! thou shalt hide them privily by thine own presence, from the provoking of all men; thou shalt keep them secretly in thy tabernacle from the strife of tongues. Thanks be to the Lord."

§ 25. Ps. xxxv. "Plead thou my cause, O Lord, with them that strive with me: and stop the way against them that persecute me. Let them be confounded and put to shame, that seek after my soul; for they have privily laid a net to destroy me without a cause. O deliver my soul from the calamities which they bring on me: stand up to help me, and say unto my soul, I am thy salvation. O Lord, keep not silence; O Lord, be not far from me. Let them not say in their hearts, Ah! so would we have it: O let them not say, We have swallowed him up. But let them be turned back and brought to confusion, that devise my hurt, and that rejoice at my trouble. Let them be clothed with shame and dishonour, that magnify themselves against me. But let them shout for joy that favour my righteous cause. Blessed be the Lord, who hath pleasure in the

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prosperity of his servant. They that devise mischief, shall be as the dust before the wind; and the angel of the Lord scattering them. Their way shall be darkness and slipperiness; and the angel of the Lord persecuting them. Their own net that they have hid, shall catch themselves; and into that very destruction shall they fall, which they have digged for others. Then shall my soul rejoice in the Lord, and my tongue shall speak of his righteousness, and of his praise all the day long."

§ 26. Ps. xxxvii. "Fret not thyself because of the ungodly: Neither be thou envious against the evil-doers. For they shall soon be cut down as the grass, and be withered even as the green herb. Fret not thyself in any wise: for evil-doers shall be cut off; but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. Yet a little while and the wicked shall not be: thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not appear more. The ungodly seeketh counsel against the just, and gnasheth against him with his teeth: He hath drawn out the sword; and hath bent his bow. But his sword shall go through his own heart, and his bow shall be broken. For his day is coming; yea, the Lord hath seen, that his day is coming. The arms of the ungodly are broken: But the righteous Lord upholdeth the righteous, and knoweth the days of the godly; therefore shall their inheritance endure forever. The ungodly watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him: But the Lord will not leave him in his hand; nor will he condemn him when is judged of him. I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay-tree. Yet he passed away; and, lo! he was not: I went by, and behold he was gone; yea, I sought him but he could not be found. For the end of the ungodly is, that they shall be rooted out at the last: But the salvation of the righteous cometh of the Lord; and he will be their strength in the time of trouble, and save them because they trust him. Amen.

§ 37. Ps. xxxviii. "I am as a deaf man, and hear them not; and as one that is dumb, who doth not open his mouth. For I am become even as a man that hear-

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eth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs. For in thee, O Lord, have I put my trust: Thou shalt answer for me, O Lord my God. I am truly set in the plague, and my heaviness is ever in my sight."

Ps. xxxix. "I became dumb, and opened not my mouth, for it was thy doing. I am both a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were."

Ps. lv. "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall nourish thee, and shall not suffer the righteous to fall forever. And as for them, thou, O God, shalt bring them into the pit of destruction. The blood-thirsty and deceitful men shall not live out half their days: Nevertheless, my trust shall be in thee, O Lord."

Ps. lvii. "Be merciful unto me, O God, for my soul trusteth in thee; and under the shadow of thy wings shall be my refuge, until this tyranny be over-past. I will call unto the Most High, even unto the God that shall perform the cause which I have in hand. He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproof of him that would eat me up. God shall send forth his mercy and truth: My soul is among lions. I lie among the children of men that are set on fire, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword. Set up thyself, O God, above the heavens, and thy glory above all the earth. They have laid a net for my feet, and pressed down my soul: They have digged a pit before me, and are fallen into the midst of it themselves. I will give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the people; and I will sing unto thee among the nations. For the greatness of thy mercy reacheth unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds."

§ 28. Ps. lxiv. "Hide me from the insurrection of wicked doers, who have whet their tongues like a sword, and shoot out their arrows, even bitter words. That they may privily shoot at the perfect, suddenly do they hit him, and fear not. Yet their own tongues shall make them fall, insomuch that whoso seeth them, shall laugh them to scorn."

Psal. lxxi. "Mine enemies speak against me, and they that lay wait for my soul take their counsel together, saying; God hath forsaken him, persecute him and

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take him, for there is none to deliver him.—I will go forth in the strength of the Lord God, and will make mention of thy righteousness only. Thou, O God, hast taught me from my youth up until now; therefore will I tell of thy wondrous works.—O what great troubles and adversities hast thou shewed me! And yet didst thou turn and refresh me, yea, and bring me from the depths of the earth. Thou hast brought me to great honour, and comforted me on every side."

§ 29. Psal. cxxi. "I will lift up my eyes unto the hills, from whence comes my help. My help comes even from the Lord, who hath made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved.—The Lord himself is thy keeper; the Lord is thy defence upon thy right-hand: So that the sun shall not burn thee by day; neither the moon by night."

Psal. cxl. "Deliver me, O Lord, from the evil man, and preserve me from the wicked man, who imagine mischief in their hearts, and stir up strife all the day long. They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; adders' poison is under their lips.—Sure I am that the Lord will avenge the poor, and maintain the cause of the helpless. The righteous also shall give thanks unto thy name, and the just shall continue in thy sight."

Psal. cxlii. "I cried unto the Lord with my voice.—O deliver me from my persecutors; for they are too strong for me."

CHAP. XVIII.

That the Consideration of the Sufferings and Sorrows of Christ is the most effectual Method for subduing in us all carnal Delights.

MAT. XXVI. 38.—*My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.*

§ 1. THE third branch of the crosses and afflictions of Christ consists in that *unspeakable grief* and sorrow he underwent, even from his very infancy. For seeing his

most holy soul, by virtue of the hypostatical union, was replenished with the light of divine knowledge and wisdom, whereby he perpetually beheld what should befal him, as if it were already present; he must needs have, even from his first breath, endured the greatest grief and anxiety of mind. For the torments of soul and body, which he foresaw, proved beyond any expression what mortals are able to conceive, astonishing and grievous. The more delicate, the more pure and innocent the human nature in Christ was, the greater must needs have been the pain and anguish that affected him: Of which these sorrows and spiritual torments that are wont to work upon the inmost centre of the soul, are proof sufficient. For inasmuch as the constitution of the soul, by reason of its immortality, exceeds that of the body in worth and fineness; so her pains exceed those of the body in depth and acuteness. For this reason Christ never rejoiced upon his own account, and with regard only to himself; but when he saw that his heavenly Father was known, and worshipped, and his divine works manifested unto the world. Hence we read, that "He rejoiced in spirit," at the return of the seventy disciples.

§ 2. Since none of all these things were unknown to him, which he was to suffer, and that even from his own people and countrymen; he could not but be highly afflicted with the remembrance thereof: which also was still more and more aggravated, the nigher he approached to the time appointed for his passion. This himself testifies, saying: "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished?" And the time of this baptism being now come, he says: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death:" intimating thereby the excessive and unutterable grief and anguish of spirit that forced from him that sweat, which, like drops of blood, fell down to the ground in his agony. And what pains he suffered besides in his most tender and sensible body, no tongue, no eloquence of men is able sufficiently to declare. And this greatness of torment was caused *first* by the greatness of sin; which being an infinite and inexpressible evil, its

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full punishment and atonement, could not but cause in the Son of God immense and most exquisite torments too: which to a mere man had been altogether insupportable.

§ 3. The *second* reason of this exquisite grief, was, because he bore the sins of the world: not these only, which hitherto from the beginning of the world had been committed, but those also, which men should become guilty of through all ages down to the end of the world. And therefore such as is the number and height of all sins of all men through all generations; such must needs have been the pains and sorrows endured by the Lord. For which cause he prayed on the mount of Olives: "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me."

§ 4. *Thirdly*: the torments of Christ were not a little heightened by that most perfect love he bore to his heavenly Father. The greater one's love is, the greater is also the grief occasioned by what interferes with it. As on the contrary, the less it is, the less are we troubled by what thwarts it. Since therefore Christ loved his heavenly Father with a most exalted and consummate love; his affliction must needs have been exceeding grievous on account of the heinousness of sin, wherewith now fallen men did shamefully insult over so dear and beloved a Father: insomuch that the sins of the whole world, with the pains he endured for them, did not affect him so lively, as the sorrow he felt on account of the indignity offered to a God, who in his very nature is love itself. And surely it was upon account of this love to the Father, (which deserved all the returns of love of which the creature was capable,) that Christ sustained most exquisite pains, and a most ignominious death; viz. that by a satisfaction proportionable to the offence, he might regain unto wretched mortals, that love and favour of God, which they by a heinous apostasy had forfeited in Adam.

§ 5. In the *fourth* place was the suffering of Christ increased by his great love to mankind. For as he died for all, and bore the sins of all, so also was he exceedingly

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desirous to see the happy effect of his blood, which is the salvation of all believers. Hence the unbelief and wickedness of men, every where overflowing the world, and hindering this love from taking its effect upon sinners, caused him most grievous and bitter torments: but especially was he affected with such as by their profligate life and final impenitency, did throw away their souls for a handful of lust and vanity. Not to speak here any thing of that cruel hatred and envy, wrath and blasphemy, which some hurried on even to trample on that blood which was designed to save them: of which he himself says, that reproach hath broken his heart; lamenting not so much his own, as their condition, who reproached him in so heinous a manner.

§ 6. *Fifthly:* Another circumstance which pierced the very heart of our Lord, was his being forsaken of God, notwithstanding he was the Son of God himself. For though it be true, God could not forsake him, who himself was God, and who did not cease to be God, even when he hanged on the cross, when he expired, and when he was buried; yet does he complain of being *forsaken;* and this lamentable complaint our Saviour poured out to shew, that God withdrew from him, as from a man, the support of his heavenly comfort, hiding himself from our Lord in this dark hour of temptation. He manifests also by this exclamation, the extreme misery in which he then was.

§ 7. The *sixth* aggravation of the anguish of Christ, was the consideration of the dignity of his person. He was true God. From whence it is plain, that all the reproaches and blasphemies uttered against him, were an infinite evil, as being directed against the entire person of Christ, who was true God and man, and so endured, both as God and man, the revilings of his enemies in his whole person: all which left undoubtedly a most exquisite impression of sorrow upon his soul.

§ 8. And who is, in the *seventh* place, able to explain sufficiently, what pains the Lord suffered in his most innocent, most holy, most tender, and delicate body: Or

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who can doubt, that a body most innocent, most delicate, most noble, most pure, conceived by the Holy Ghost himself, personally united with the divine nature, filled with the Spirit of God, and with all the fulness of the Godhead; I say, that such a body should not feel most grievous and bitter pains, if it be smitten, scourged, wounded, pierced, crucified, and put to death at last? No words are expressive enough to set forth the smart and acuteness thereof. And what is all our cross and affliction, if compared with this suffering of the Lord? For we, being sinners, have most justly deserved eternal death and damnation: And yet we find, how even this small allotment of cross designed for us, is too heavy a burden for our tender christians, who do what they can to shift it off, though at the same time it be appointed as healthful physic to procure the safety and happiness of their souls. Surely a soul, who is a sincere lover of Christ, can wish no other condition and manner of life in this world, but such as comes up nearest to the original of the blessed life of Christ. Which conformity of our life to the life of Christ, we ought to account our greatest gain and dignity in this world. In this, let the true lover of Christ rejoice, that he has been thought worthy to suffer with Christ his head and Saviour.

§ 9. Seeing then that affliction is like to be the constant companion of a christian in his way to heaven and happiness, or, to use the apostle's phrase, since he must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God; what cause can we pretend, why we should not most willingly step over into this path of the holy cross? especially since we know that the Son of God himself has travelled this way before us, and by his holy example, sanctified it, not having entered into his glory but by sufferings? And since he has, in spite of all the insults of the enemy, entered nevertheless into glory at last, we may also assure ourselves, that our affliction, which is but for a moment, shall be followed in the end, by an everlasting weight of glory and happiness: As the Lord did not spare himself, but laid himself entirely out for the service of others, undergoing all this by no other

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impulse but that of fervent love and charity; so should this love of our Redeemer, raise reciprocal flames of love in our souls, and never suffer us to grow faint and weary under any affliction whatever.

CHAP. XIX.

How in Christ crucified, as in a Book of Life, we may read our own Sins, together with the Wrath, Righteousness, love, and Wisdom of God.

REV. v. 1.—*And I saw in the right-hand of him that sat on the throne, a book written within and without.*

§ 1. CHRIST crucified is set before our eyes as a book of life, that thence we may learn the sacred wisdom of God most eminently displayed therein. For in him the whole scripture, the law, and all the prophets, are completely fulfilled, viz. by his most perfect obedience, wherein he was faithful even unto death, and his suffering the most cruel torments for the sins of the world. And this perfect internal and external obedience and suffering, is that book of life written within and without.

§ 2. Wherefore, in the first place, the crucified Jesus presents us with a deplorable sight of our sins, both of their number and heinousness. By the lamentable complaint into which he burst forth, he manifested the inward anguish of his soul, which he suffered for the hidden and more secret sins of our heart. In his wounded and mangled body, dyed in crimson-gore, and bleeding on the cross, he makes us to behold, and read as in a book, the malignity of those sins we have committed by all our members, in having yielded them up to the government of lust and carnal desires.

§ 3. Besides this, may the devout soul behold in Christ crucified, the justice of God in trying sinners. There was no other means to remove both our sin and the punishment attending it, than this high atonement

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made by the Lord himself. And from hence we may infer, that God is so far from letting any sin go unpunished, that he will rather deliver up his most beloved Son unto death, than connive at the transgression of sinners.

§ 4. From hence the soul may go on to contemplate the infinite love and condescending mercy of his heavenly Father, most wonderfully displayed in our crucified Saviour. Rather than we should forever perish in our wretched state, and be bound over to eternal death and damnation, he would have his own Son to make satisfaction for us; which we ourselves, yea, and all the other creatures besides, had never been able to perform.

§ 5. The contemplation of Christ crucified will, in the next place, lead us to a sight of the most gracious will, providence, and fatherly care of God, designed for the recovery of lost mankind. No opposition was so great, no difficulty so stubborn and obstinate, which he did not conquer by his beloved Son, the restorer of our salvation. That we might inherit everlasting joys, he left nothing untried for that purpose, not sparing even his own Son.

§ 6. Moreover in this same book of life, viz. the crucified Jesus appears most plainly the infinite wisdom of God in finding out a means of salvation, such as could never have entered into the thoughts of any creature whatever. It was not only consistent with, but even highly conducive to illustrate both the justice and mercy of God: the business of salvation being so wisely ordered, that by manifesting the infinite mercy of God, his justice was not infringed at all. As on the other hand, Christ by his death has so atoned for sin, that in satisfying the rigour of divine justice, his infinite mercy is rendered more bright and conspicuous. And as by eating of the forbidden tree, the first Adam brought us under the curse, so God in his marvellous wisdom has, by the tree of the cross, taken away the curse, and revived his blessing. Yea, by the unsearchable council of the divine wisdom, it is brought about, that through the death of Christ, all things detained under the power

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of death, are restored to life again, death itself being destroyed at last. By his pains and torments is purchased for us eternal pleasure in heaven: by his griefs and sorrows, joys celestial without end. And by this most tremendous and wonderful work of God, though foolish and even ridiculous in the eye of the world, has he been pleased to confound the wisdom of the world, and by the foolishness of God, has he manifested a wisdom altogether unfathomable to the eye of men.

§ 7. In Christ crucified appears farther the brightest and fairest pattern of patience and meekness that ever was seen. So far was he from revenging the injuries done him, that he made intercession to his Father for his revilers, yea, even laid down his life for the sins of those who were the authors of taking it away: Not here to insist upon his most astonishing humility, wherein he was so eminent, that he readily underwent the most ignominious death of the cross. Thus is the death and passion of Christ become to a faithful soul a redemption from hell, an inlet into paradise, a complete reconciliation with God, a victory over the devil, that great enemy of souls, a full satisfaction for sins, and in one word, an entire reparation of that original righteousness which was lost and ruined in the fall.

§ 8. By all which it sufficiently appears to a christian soul, that Christ crucified is a book of life indeed, teaching nothing but eternal and infallible truths of God. Let us then silently sit down at the feet of our crucified Lord, who, as the great Teacher of souls, and book of life itself, will not neglect to instil into an humble heart, the lesson of a living faith, and of a holy life attending it; if else we desire to be not dead, but living members of his spiritual body, and by being planted in his life and death, bring forth also suitable fruits of righteousness.

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CHAP. XX.

Of the Power and Necessity of Prayer in these Divine Contemplations.

SONG iii. 2.—*I sought him whom my soul loveth.*

§ 1. SEEING the true knowledge of God, and Christ crucified, is not to be attained, unless we keep our eye constantly fixed upon the book of the innocent and holy life of Jesus Christ our Lord; and since in order to this, a devout, humble, fervent, and earnest prayer be required; it is therefore highly necessary to make some fuller inquiry into the *nature of prayer*, which does not so much consist in an utterance of fine words, as in a meditation or sweet intercourse of the heart with God, and in a lifting up of the soul, and of all her faculties and powers to the same. As it is impossible to find God without prayer; so prayer is the ordinary means appointed for seeking and finding him. And as it falls under a three-fold denomination, it being either *oral*, *internal*, or *supernatural*; (according to that of St. Paul: "I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also;") so we are now to consider every one in particular.

§ 2. *Oral prayer* is a humble address to God, and an external exercise, using the soul gradually to the internal duty of prayer, and leading a man into the more interior recesses of his own heart; especially if the words outwardly uttered, by an attentive application of the mind, be well pondered, mused, and meditated upon. This proves often a means to approach spirit and soul so nigh to God, as in filial confidence, to entertain a sweet conference with him our heavenly Father.

§ 3. *Internal* prayer is offered up without intermission, by the spirit and mind, unto God in faith, according to that of our Saviour: "The true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." And that of David: "Let the meditation of my heart, (says

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he,) be ever before thee." And again: "I communed with mine own heart, and my spirit made diligent search." *Whereby*, says St. Paul, speaking of the Spirit of adoption, *we cry Abba, Father.* And by this internal prayer, we are led on gradually to that which is *supernatural*; and according to Taulerus, "Consists in a true union with God by faith; when our created spirit dissolves, as it were, and sinks away in the uncreated Spirit of God; and then all is transacted in a moment, whatever in words or deeds hath been done and declared by all the saints from the beginning of the world." And for that reason is this supernatural prayer unspeakably more excellent than that which is external chiefly. For therein the soul is by true faith so replenished with divine love, that it can think of nothing else but of God only. Or if perhaps another thought should slide unawares into the heart, it proves an occasion of great grief and trouble of mind, and the soul cannot be at ease, till that intruding thought be turned out again.

§ 4. A soul once arrived at this happy state, gives little or no employment to the tongue: it is silent to the Lord: it pants after, and thirsts for God: it longs, yea, even faints for him: it loves him only, rests in him alone, disregarding and not minding the world, nor any worldly affairs. Whence it is still more and more filled and possessed with an experimental savoury knowledge of God, with love and joy to such a degree, as no tongue is able to express. For whatever the soul then perceives, is beyond all possibility of being explained by words. Insomuch that if one should ask a soul wrapped up in these sublime contemplations, what she thinks on, or what she perceives? She would certainly answer: a good that is above all good. What seest thou? A perfection of beauty transcending all created forms. What feelest thou? A joy surpassing all joys. What dost thou taste? The inexpressible delights of love. Nay, such a one would tell you, that all the words that could possibly be framed, were but a shadow, and came infinitely short of the comprehensiveness of what was inwardly felt and sweetly suffered; nothing but the actual sense and perception itself, being capable to give us a sound

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impression of it. This is the voice of the eternal word, and its discourse with a loving soul; according to that of the Lord: "He that loveth me, I will manifest myself unto him." To conclude: whatever here is felt, whatever here is seen, is above nature. Here voices are heard, and words that are unspeakable, nor is it possible for a man to utter them. And this is called intellectual and mental speech.

§ 5. This is the school* wherein the soul learns to know God aright, and, as it were, to taste him. Whilst she knows him, she loves him; and whilst she loves him, she affectionately longs for a total enjoyment of him. For this is a most certain sign and property of love; to desire wholly to possess the object beloved, to be intimately united with, and altogether transformed into it. But if it chances to fall out (as often it does) that the soul perceives herself to be touched as with some endearing glance, though lasting but for a moment; then verily she most earnestly endeavours to recal, if possible, and longer to retain this beam of heavenly joy, which darts forth upon her, and to recover this divine taste which so lovingly affected her: and all this she wishes, in order to be the more inseparably united to her beloved. From this affectionate desire springs up both mental and oral prayer; the soul being fully convinced that these heavenly pleasures and divine visitations are not to be attained but by fervent prayer only. And in all this a most wonderful wisdom of God appears, whereby every thing is managed in order and harmony, and the soul by a gradual ascent led up to the enjoyment of the greatest good. Thus none is permitted to attain to mental prayer, but he who begins with that which is vocal, and endeavours to blow up the coals of secret internal prayer by some external act and exercise. Again: none must have an access to the supernatural prayer, or to an union with the sublimest and most delightful good, but by mental prayer. But these things can only be known by experimental

* August. Tract. 3, in 1 Joh. Jam hic videte magnum sacramentum fratres. Magisteria forinsecus adjutoria quædam sunt & admonitiones. Cathedram in cœlo habet, qui corde docet.

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perception, not to be expressed by words. And this is the true cause, why God so strictly, so frequently and earnestly enjoins prayer: because it is a sacred pledge and bond by which God draws us up to himself, and by elevating us into his immediate presence, detains us there a while, and unites us, as it were, to our first original and divine pedigree which we lost by our heinous apostasy from so endless a good. If this prayer begins to languish at any time, then we lose by little and little, the sweet remembrance of God, and deprive ourselves of all the unspeakable benefits that are wont to result from his most comfortable presence.

§ 6. If therefore you would rightly pray, see you do it not with a half, or divided, but with a whole and entire heart. But this is not to be attained, but by frequent exercise and a continual and unwearied diligence. Without this, you are never like to reap the fruits of prayer. On the contrary, as often as you give attendance to any external work, take care you set not your heart upon it. If you eat, drink, or attend any other outward affair incident to human life, see that you bestow not yourself, that is, your whole heart upon it. Do it as if you did it not. For your heart is to rest entirely in God, and closely to adhere to him by mental and internal prayer; which cannot be done except it be set free from the tiresome incumbrances of the world. The more you offer yourself up to the Lord by prayer, the greater will be your illumination. And again: the more the knowledge of God is enlarged upon your mind; the more endearing will be your sense and perception of the highest good, the more ardent also, the more tender and affectionate will be your love to the Lord; and in fine, the more capable will you be of enjoying him. Your soul being thus disposed, shall in a supernatural manner taste of a happiness so high and transcendent, as infinitely exceeds all the words and expressions of men.

§ 7. Of this threefold prayer, Jesus Christ himself has set us a pattern most bright and perfect, from whom we may learn the nature and method of it, if we do but at-

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tentively consider his manner of praying recorded in history. For we find that he often continued whole days and nights in prayer to God, praying with all fervency from the very bottom of his soul, and in prayer triumphing and rejoicing in spirit. He has therefore both by words and actions, or example, taught us how to pray, leaving us a pattern to follow after, and commanding us to "watch and to pray, that we enter not into temptation." He recommends to us also most frequently the duty of prayer thereby to testify, that nothing was more pleasing, nothing more acceptable to him than our prayer, having it enjoined for no other reason, than to let us see, how entirely he loved us, and how desirous he was, that by prayer we should be made partaker of the greatest and most precious good.

§ 8. But, lest we should pretend, that so noble an effect as results from a due performance of prayer was not attainable by us, the Lord does not think it enough to have said, *ask*; but encourages us also with a promise annexed: *And ye shall receive, that your joy may be full;* exciting us moreover to prayer by his own example, seeing the most exquisite sufferings did not extinguish in him, but rather blow up more the ardour of his devotion: "For being in agony, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground." Set therefore this mirror of prayer before your eyes, and learn to persevere therein. Whenever you begin to grow faint and weak in praying, turn but seriously the eyes of your mind upon your Lord Christ, who prayed not for himself, or upon his own account, but for you and upon your account, and so sanctified your prayer, blessed it, and added life and efficacy thereto. Him therefore behold, who though he was true God, and consequently in actual possession of all things; yet as he was man, he obtained for you of his heavenly Father, all things by prayer. And hence was his whole life a continual and uninterrupted prayer, and a perpetual longing to do the will of God: which therefore he finished also praying on the cross.

§ 9. If therefore your Lord and Saviour prayed so fervently on your account, and was heard; then surely

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he will not suffer your prayers to be poured forth in vain. Did he procure all things for you by prayer, think you, then, that without it, you can obtain any the least blessing? And as it is plain, that without divine grace, without light, without knowledge, and in fine, without faith, not one can be saved; it is no less plain, that these and all other heavenly graces, in no otherwise can be attained to but by prayer only. It is the Lord you must entreat by fervent prayer, to obtain from him only, faith, love, hope, humility, patience, the Holy Spirit, together with the whole train of gospel virtues, which he alone is able to bestow and to strengthen in your soul. It is he alone that infuses them into the heart. But as he that has them not, cannot give them; so the Lord, whose gift they are, will not give them, without being asked.

§ 10. Now if you are truly desirous to pour out your soul before the Lord in fervency of spirit; believe me, there is not a more ready and effectual means conducing thereto, than with the eyes of your mind to behold the mirror of the most meek and most humble life of Christ: To keep, I say, your eyes attentively fixed upon the poverty, the reproach and contempt, the griefs and sorrows, and the most ignominious death of your blessed Saviour. Into this book of prayer, if you diligently look, you will perceive your heart and mind to become inflamed with most affectionate and ardent desires. And through the devil and the flesh shall not cease to assault you with temptations on all hands, whilst you continue faithful in these holy exercises; yet by means of devout prayer, shall they be subdued at last. Nor is only prayer excited and stirred up by the contemplation of Christ crucified, but the heart is also cleansed withal; without which purification of the heart by faith, our prayers will prove altogether ineffectual in the sight of God: Whereas, after a sincere application to the Lord by prayer, the Spirit of God visits the heart with his gracious presence, as he descended upon the apostles, even when they were with one accord praying at Pentecost.

§ 11. What concerns particularly the temptations that are wont to attend the duty of prayer, you will behave yourself under them as the Lord himself did; who in

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the midst of the agony he suffered on Mount Olivet, *prayed the more earnestly.* Thus shall your prayer prove at last victorious over all your enemies. By prayer the Lord manifests himself to his children. By prayer we learn to practise true humility: for it is by prayer the highest is united to the lowest; the most high God to the most humble heart. And this humility is the very inlet, whereby plenty of divine grace is infused into the soul. This grace, the more it humbles a man, the more grace itself gets in the soul. And again: the more a soul is enriched with grace, the more does she improve in humility.

§ 12. The most considerable temptation and obstruction in prayer, seems to be, when God withdraws the grace of a fervent and lively devotion. And yet in this case it is, that we ought to stir up ourselves the more carefully to prayer and supplication. For though indeed a prayer poured forth with a spirit of power and fervency be acceptable to God; yet is that which climbs up the throne of grace in affliction, temptation, spiritual dryness, and brokenness of soul, still more pleasing in his sight. For as the heart of a father is sooner softened into tenderness and commiseration, by the broken sighs and trembling words of a sick and languishing child; than by the strong voice and more ready utterance of one in perfect health; so is the secret affliction, and earnest, though weak effort of a soul truly affected with a sense of her weakness in faith, of her poverty in spirit, and of her want of spiritual life and comfort, by far more acceptable to our infinitely merciful Father, than the more vigorous petitions of a soul raised by a sense of faith, and abounding in consolation. Hold out patiently in these spiritual straits, and depend upon it, that the Lord in his own time will certainly *restore unto thee the joy of thy salvation.*

FINIS.

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